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THE
WESTERN FRONT

Drawings by
MUIRHEAD BONE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY
FIELD-MARSHAL SIR DOUGLAS HAIG
G.C.B., G.C.V.O., K.C.I.E., A.D.C.

VOLUME ONE

NEW YORK
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

For Contents see reverse side

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THE WESTERN FRONT

DRAWINGS BY
MUIRHEAD BONE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
GENERAL SIR DOUGLAS HAIG
G.C.B., G.C.V.O., K.C.I.E., A.D.C.

GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK:
DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & COMPANY
1917.

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I have been asked to write a foreword to Mr. Muirhead Bone's drawings. This I am glad to do, as they illustrate admirably the daily life of the troops under my command.

The conditions under which we live in France are so different from those to which people at home are accustomed, that no pen, however skilful, can explain them without the aid of the pencil.

The destruction caused by war, the wide areas of devastation, the vast mechanical agencies essential in war, both for transport and the offensive, the masses of supplies required, and the wonderful cheerfulness and indomitable courage of the soldiers under varying climatic conditions, are worthy subjects for the artist who aims at recording for all time the spirit of the age in which he has lived.

It has been said that the portrait and the picture are invaluable aids to the right reading of history. From this point of view I welcome, on behalf of the Army that I have the honour to command, this series of drawings, as a permanent record in pencil of the duties which our soldiers have been called upon to perform, and the quality and manner of its performance.

D. Haig. Gen.

General Headquarters,

November, 1916

THE WESTERN FRONT

THE British line in France and Belgium runs through country of three kinds, and each kind is like a part of England. Between the Somme and Arras a British soldier often feels that he has not quite left the place of his training on Salisbury Plain. The main roads may be different, with their endless rows of sentinel trees, and the farms are mostly clustered into villages, where they turn their backs to the streets. More of the land, too, is tilled. But the ground has the same large and gentle undulation; and these great rollers are made, as in Wiltshire, of pure chalk coated with only a little brown clay. There are the same wide prospects, the same lack of streams and ponds, the same ledges and curious carvings of the soil; and journeys on foot seem long, as they do on our downs, because so much of the road before you is visible while you march.

A little north of Arras there begins, almost at a turn of the road, a black country, where men of the South Lancashires feel at home and grant that the landscape has some of the points of Wigan. It is the region of Loos and Vermelles and Bully Grenay, most of it level ground on which the only eminences are the refuse-heaps of coal mines. Across this level the eye feels its way from one well-known stack of pit-head buildings and winding machinery to another. They are, to an English eye, strangely lofty and stand out like lighthouses over a sea. The villages near their feet are commonly " model " or " garden," with all the houses built well, as parts of one plan. As in Lancashire, farming and mining go on side by side, and in August the corn is grey with a mixture of blown dusts from collieries and from the road.

The next change is not abrupt, like the first; but it is as great. Near Ypres you are on the sands, though yet twenty miles from the sea. Here you have a sense of being in a place still alive but pensioned off by nature after its work was done. You feel it at Rye and Winchelsea, at Ravenna, and at any place which the sea has once made great and then abandoned. The wide Ypres landscape drawn by Mr. Bone was all mellow on sunny days at the end of July with the warm brown and yellow of many good crops. Almost up to the British front it was farmed minutely and intensely; in spring I had seen a man ploughing a field where a German shell, on the average, dropped every day. But all this countryside has the brooding quietude of a sort of honourable old age, dignity and pensiveness and comfort behind its natural rampart of sand dunes, but not the stir of life at full pressure.

Into this vari-coloured belt of landscape, some ninety miles long, and into its cities and villages, the war has brought strange violences of effort and several different degrees of desolation. Some villages are dead

and buried, like Pozières, where you must dig to find where a house stood. There are cities dead, but with their bones still above ground: Ypres is one—many walls stand where they did, but grass is growing among the broken stones and bits of stained glass on the floor of the Cloth Hall, and at noon a visitor's footsteps ring and echo in the empty streets like those of a belated wayfarer in midnight Oxford. "How doth the city sit desolate that once was full of people!" Again, there are towns like Arras, whose flesh, though torn, has life in it still, and seems to feel a new wound from each shell, though there be no man there to be hit. These are the broader differences between one part of the front and another. In any one place there are minor caprices of destruction or survival. Mr. Bone has drawn the top of the Albert Church tower, a building that was ugly when it was whole, but now is famous for its impending figure of the Virgin, knocked by artillery fire into a singular diving attitude, with the Child in her outstretched hands. Of the two or three buildings unharmed in Arras one is the oldest house in the town and another was Robespierre's birthplace.

In the fields, as you near the front line, you note an ascending scale of desolation. It is most clear on the battlefield of the Somme. First you pass across two or three miles of land on which so many shells fall, or used to fall, that it has not been tilled for two years. It is a waste, but a green waste, where not trodden brown by horses and men. It is gay in summer with poppies, convolvulus and cornflowers. Among the thistles and coarse grass you see self-sown shoots of the old crops, of beet, mustard and corn. Beyond this zone of land merely thrown idle you reach the ultimate desert where nothing but men and rats can live. Here even the weeds have been rooted up and buried by shells, the houses are ground down to brick-dust and lime and mixed with the earth, which is constantly turned up and turned up again by more shells and kept loose and soft. The trees, broken half-way up their trunks and stripped of leaves and branches, look curiously haggard and sinister.

It is hoped that Mr. Bone's drawings will give a new insight into the spirit in which the battle of freedom is being fought. An artist does not merely draw ruined churches and houses, guards and lorries, doctors and wounded men. It is for him to make us see something more than we do even when we see all these with our own eyes—to make visible by his art the staunchness and patience, the faithful absorption in the next duty, the humour and human decency and good nature—all the strains of character and emotion that go to make up the temper of Britain at war.

G.H.Q., FRANCE,
November, 1916

I

GENERAL SIR DOUGLAS HAIG

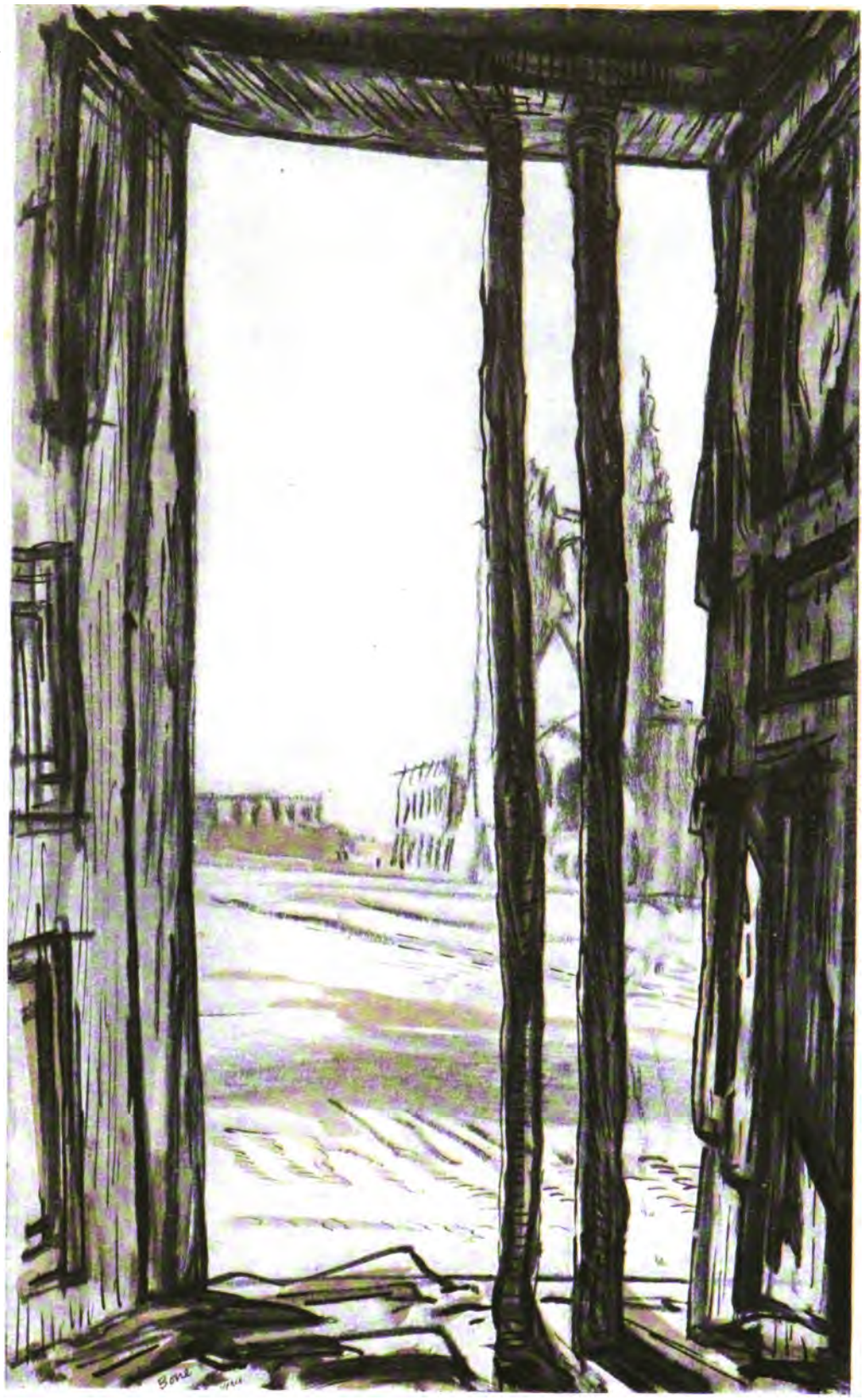
G.C.B., G.C.V.O., K.C.I.E., A.D.C.

Muirhead Bone

II

GRAND'PLACE AND RUINS OF THE CLOTH HALL, YPRES

The gaunt emptiness of Ypres is expressed in this drawing, done from the doorway of a ruined church in a neighbouring square. The grass has grown long this summer on the Grand'Place and is creeping up over the heaps of ruins. The only continuous sound in Ypres is that of birds, which sing in it as it if were country.



III

A STREET IN YPRES

In the distance is seen what remains of the Cloth Hall. On the right a wall long left unsupported is bending to its fall. The crash of such a fall is one of the few sounds that now break the silence of Ypres, where the visitor starts at the noise of a distant footfall in the grass-grown streets.

IV

DISTANT VIEW OF YPRES

The Ypres salient is here seen from a knoll some six miles south-west of the city, which is marked, near the centre of the drawing, by the dominant ruin of the cathedral. The German front line is on the heights beyond, Hooge being a little to the spectator's right of the city and Zillebeke slightly more to the right again. Dickebusch lies about half way between the eye and Ypres. The fields in sight are covered with crops, varied by good woodland. To a visitor coming from the Somme battlefield the landscape looks rich and almost peaceful.

V

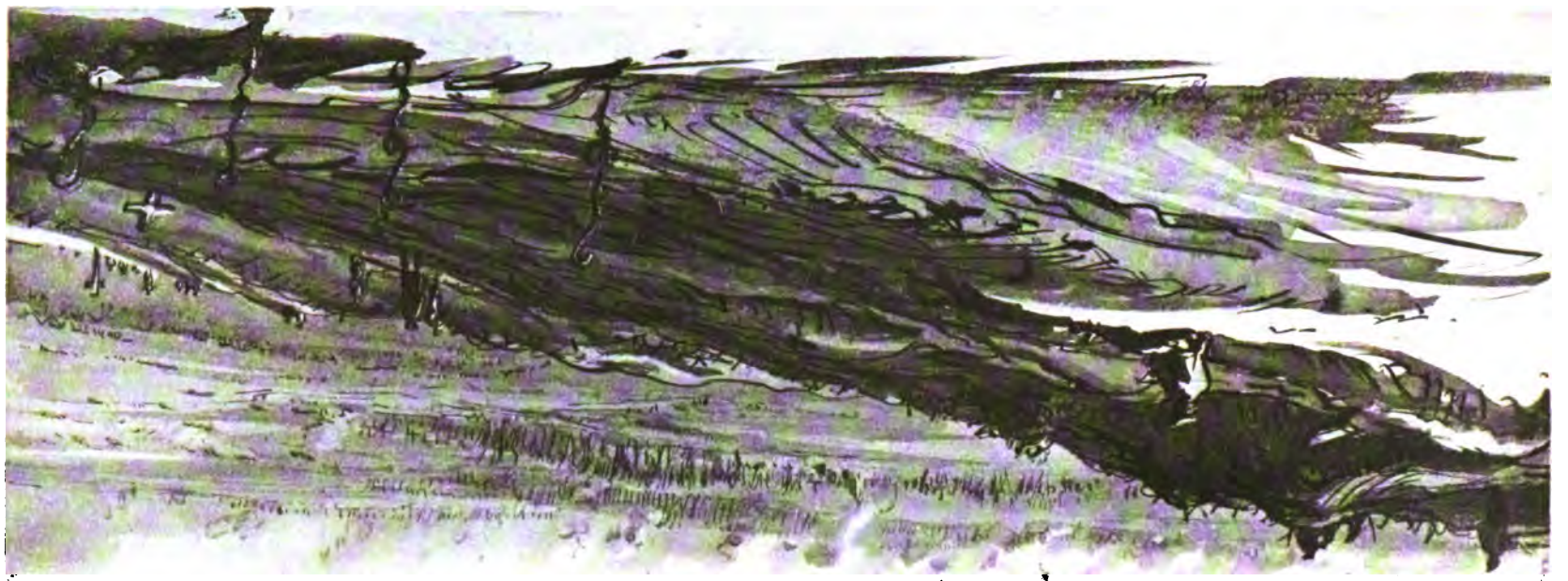
A VILLAGE CHURCH IN FLANDERS

All round this church there is the quiet of a desert. The drawing was made from within a house opposite ; the fall of its entire front provided an extensive window view.

VI

THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME

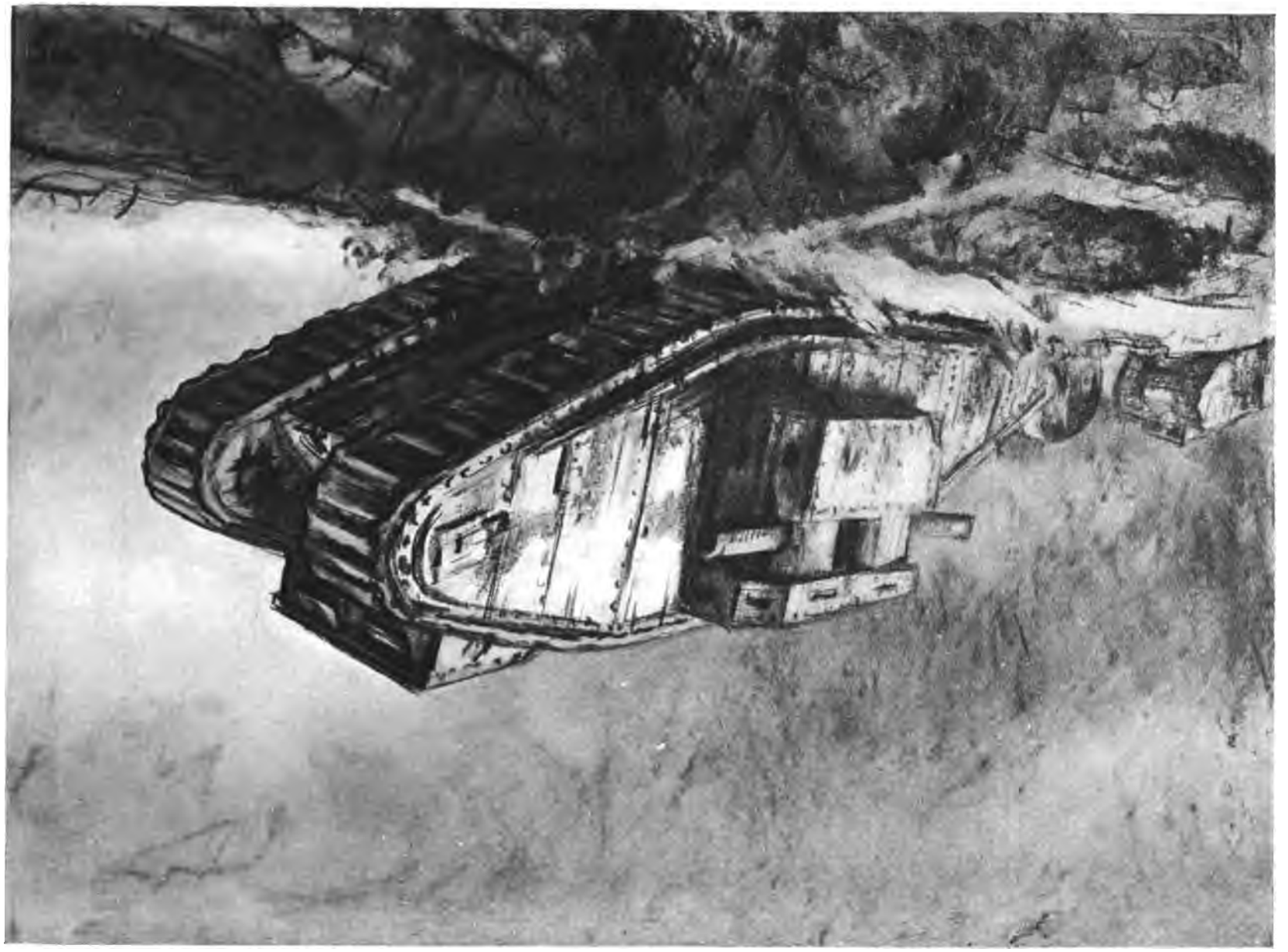
An exciting moment in the fighting for the summit ridge of the battlefield in August, 1916. All the British guns have just burst into action and our infantry are advancing unseen in the cloud of smoke on the sky-line. The puffs of smoke high in the air are from bursting shrapnel. The battle is seen from King George's Hill, near the old German front line, taken on July 1st, 1916. Below, among the ravaged trees, are the ruins of Mametz; beyond them, Mametz Wood; beyond it, again, the wood of Bazentin-le-Petit.



VII

"TANKS"

In this fine drawing Mr. Bone has seen the "Tank" in its major aspect, as a grim and daunting engine of war.



VIII

RUINED GERMAN TRENCHES, NEAR CONTALMAISON

The drawing shows a former German front-line trench reduced by our artillery fire, before an advance, to a mass of capricious looking irregularities in the ground. The German barbed wire entanglements are seen destroyed by our shell fire to open the way for our attacking troops.

IX

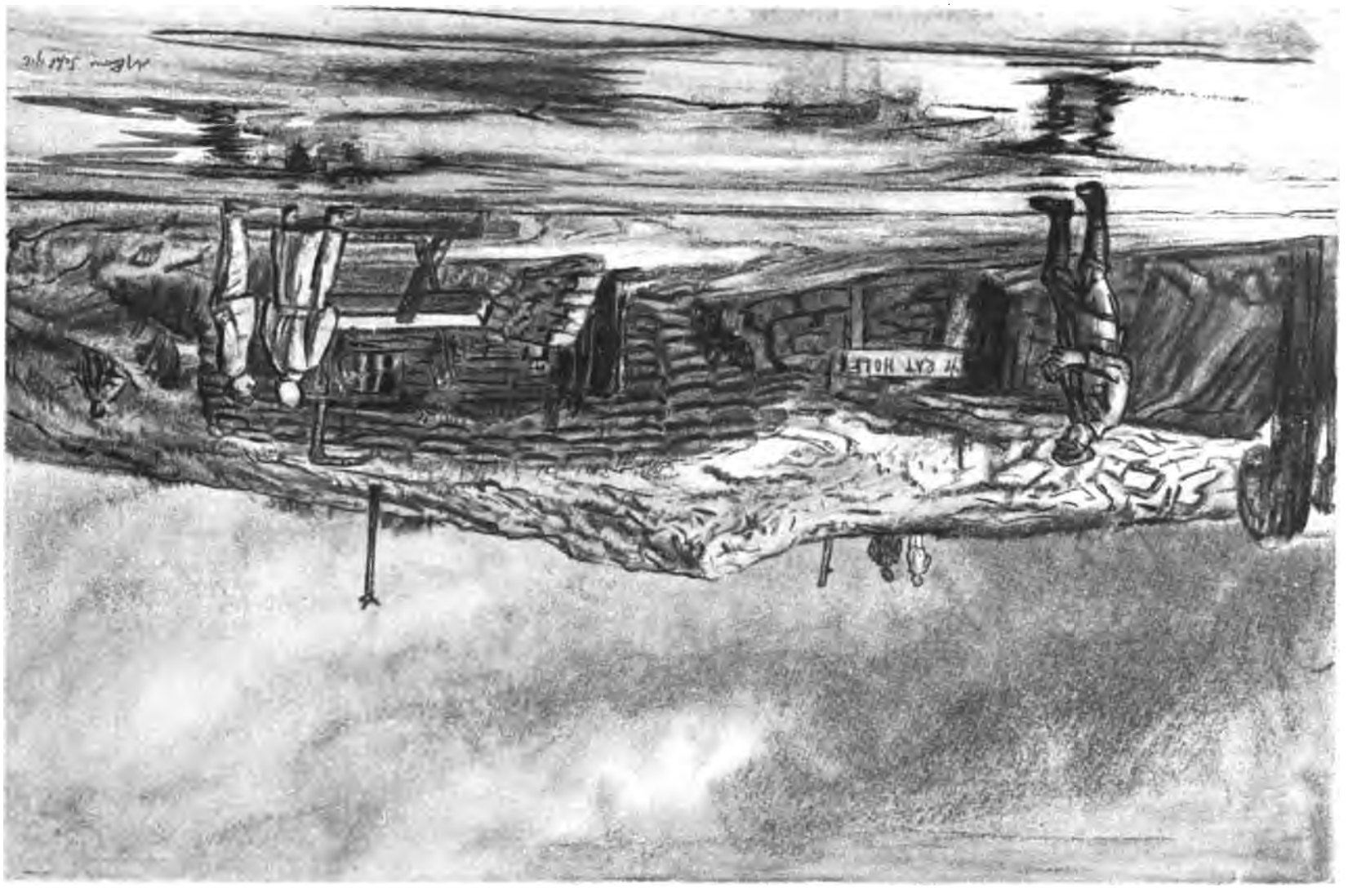
THE NIGHT PICKET

The hour is Retreat and a Sergeant-Major is inspecting the three men for duty at a one-man post during the coming night. Each man in turn will do two hours' duty, followed by four hours' rest. The fine austere drawing of the sunset, the wide waste spaces, the intent men mounting picket and the men off duty strolling at ease, is imbued with the spirit of the region just behind our front.

X

DUG-OUTS

A small hamlet of sand-bagged dug-outs a little behind the front line, seen during a passing lift of the clouds at the end of a wet day. Many dug-outs, like the one on the left, bear such names as " The Rat Hole," " It," " Some Dug-out, believe ma," " The Old Curiosity Shop " and " The Ritz." On the right, a shelf in the outer wall of sand-bags is decorated with flowers in pots.


CAT HOLE

XI

GORDON HIGHLANDERS: OFFICERS' MESS

In the bare dancing hall of a village inn behind the Somme Front. The artist has found means to interpret with the utmost sympathy and power the extraordinary romantic quality that there often is about a Highland mess in France, created by the rude setting, the primitive half light amidst cavernous gloom, and the spectator's sense of an enveloping world of strange dangers and adventures.

XII

WAITING FOR THE WOUNDED

A British advance has just begun, and the surgeons of a Divisional Collecting Station near the Somme are awaiting the arrival of the first laden stretcher-bearers. In a few minutes the three officers will be at work, perhaps for twenty-four hours on end. At one Casualty Clearing Station a distinguished surgeon performed, without resting, nineteen difficult operations, each lasting more than a hour, in cases of severe abdominal wounds, where delay would have meant the loss of life. In almost every case the man was saved. Another surgeon operated for thirty-six hours without relief. Such devotion is not exceptional in the R.A.M.C.

XIII

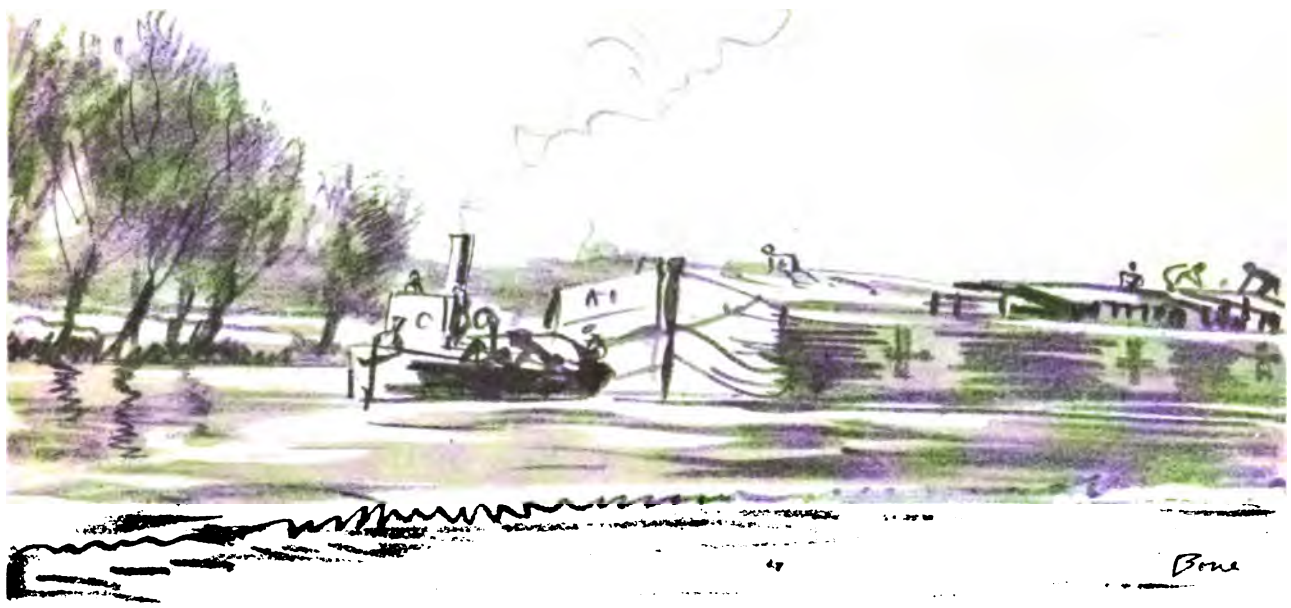
THE HAPPY WARRIOR

The place is a field dressing station. The wounded Grenadier Guardsman in the foreground on the left, wearing a German helmet and eating bread and jam, had brought in as prisoner the German who is sitting on the right with his hand to his face. The Guardsman indicated the German to the artist, and said, " Won't you draw my pal here, too, Sir ? He and me had a turn-up this morning when we took their trench, and he jabbed me in the arm and I jabbed him in the eye, and we're the best of friends." Other Germans are sitting in attitudes characteristic of newly-made prisoners.

XIV (a and b)

RED CROSS BARGES ON THE SOMME

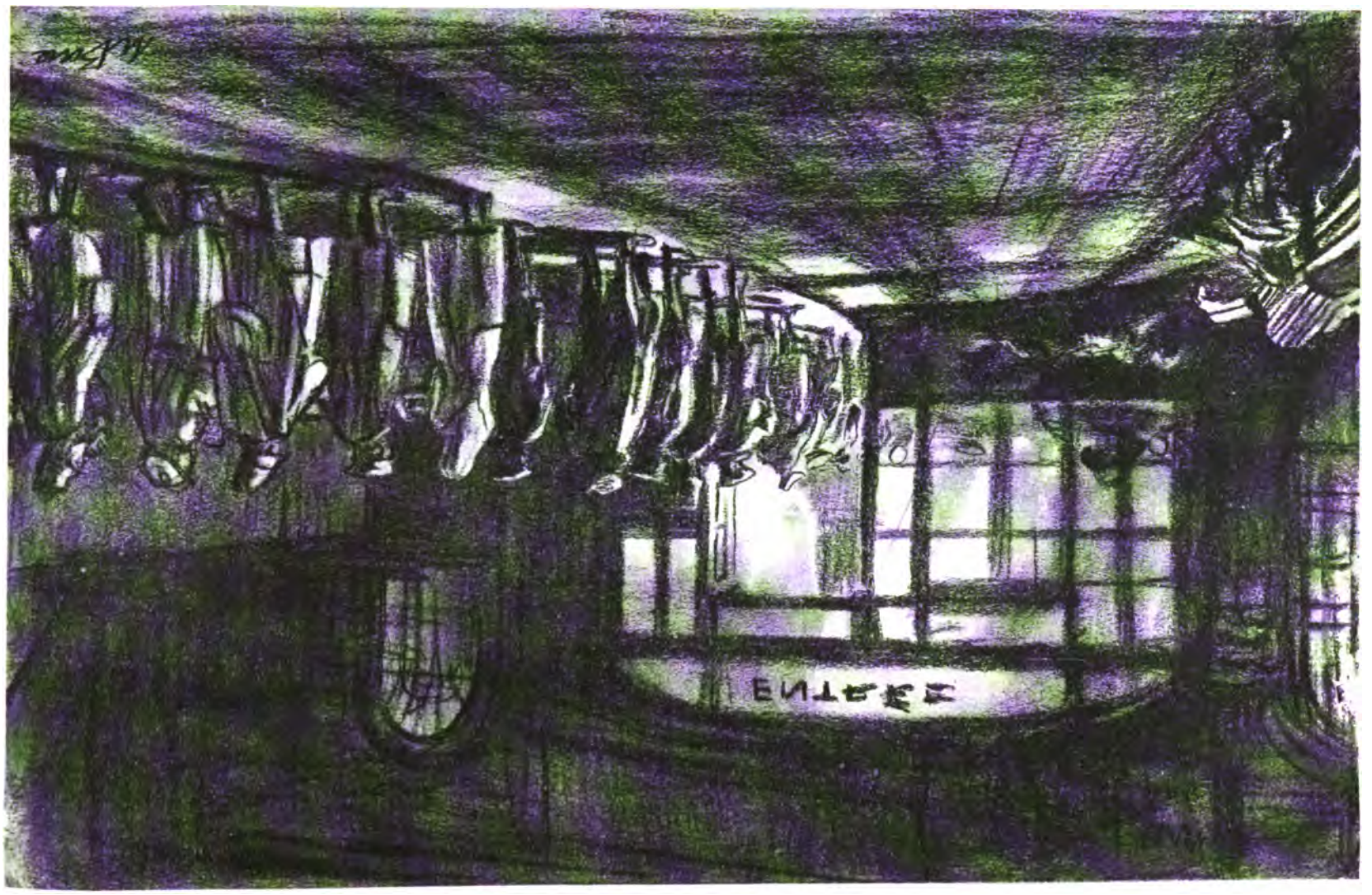
Many wounded or sick soldiers, British and French, are brought by river or canal from near the front to near a base hospital or the sea. The motion is easy, the men have good air and quiet; any who are well enough to be on deck have pleasant and changeful surroundings to look at. The English have fitted up for this purpose many of the large, square-built and bluff-bowed—almost box-like—French canal boats. They are towed, in pairs, by small tugs. The French Red Cross uses barges driven by engines placed aft.



XV

AT A BASE STATION

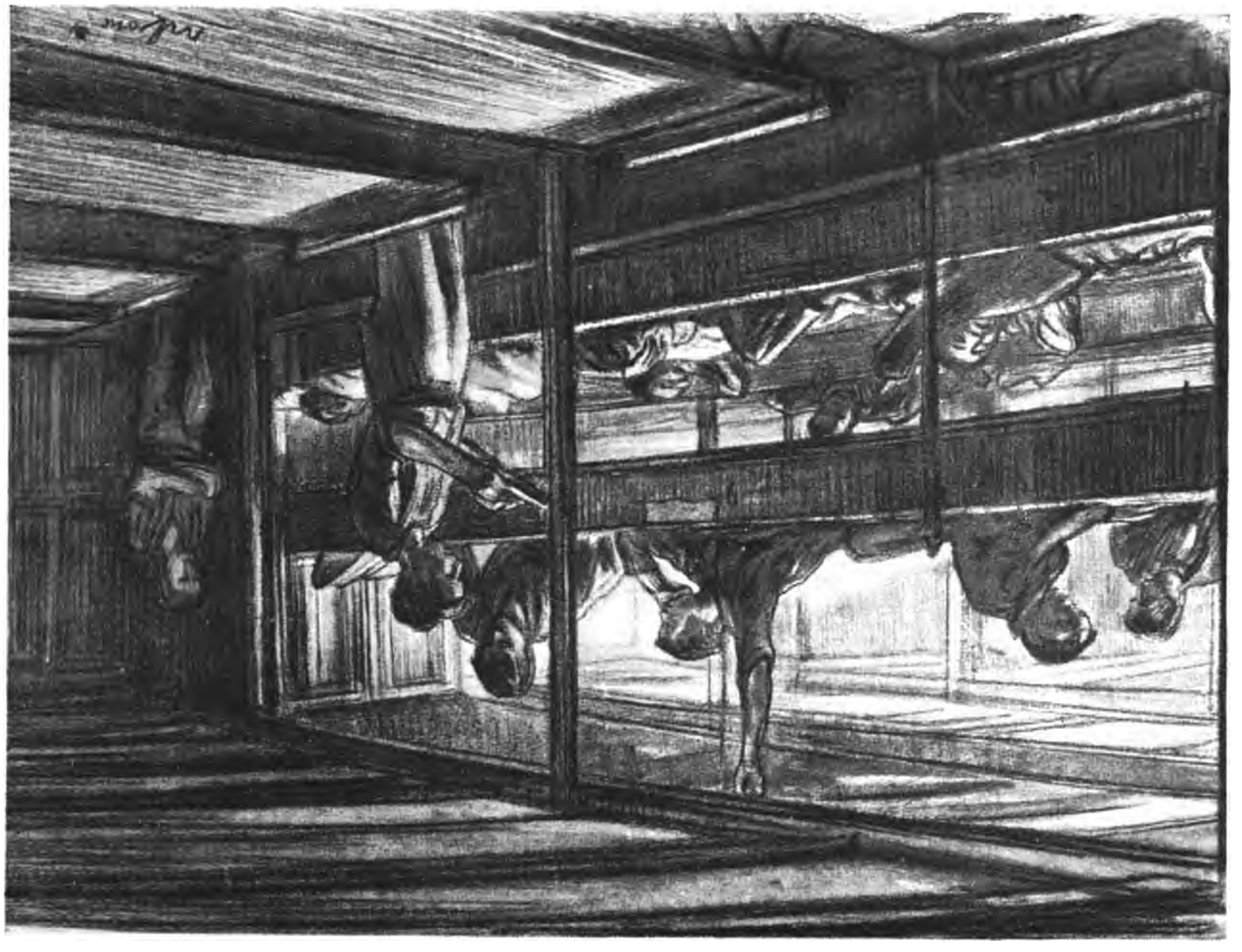
A midnight scene at a base railway station. Train-loads of " walking wounded " on their way to England are met at any hour of the day or night by V.A.D. workers who offer the men hot tea or cocoa, and bread and butter. The quality of the food, and the manner of the gift, give extraordinary pleasure to the tired men.


ENTREE

XVI

ON A HOSPITAL SHIP

The boat here is an old one; in newer boats the accommodation is finer, but the drawing shows the ordinary mode of bedding the patients in double tiers of continuous bunks. At some point in the passage an R.A.M.C. orderly asks every patient to what part of "Blighty" he belongs, and an effort is made to send him to a hospital near his home. The orderly's approach, as he makes his rounds, is always eagerly awaited throughout the ship by the wounded men.



XVII

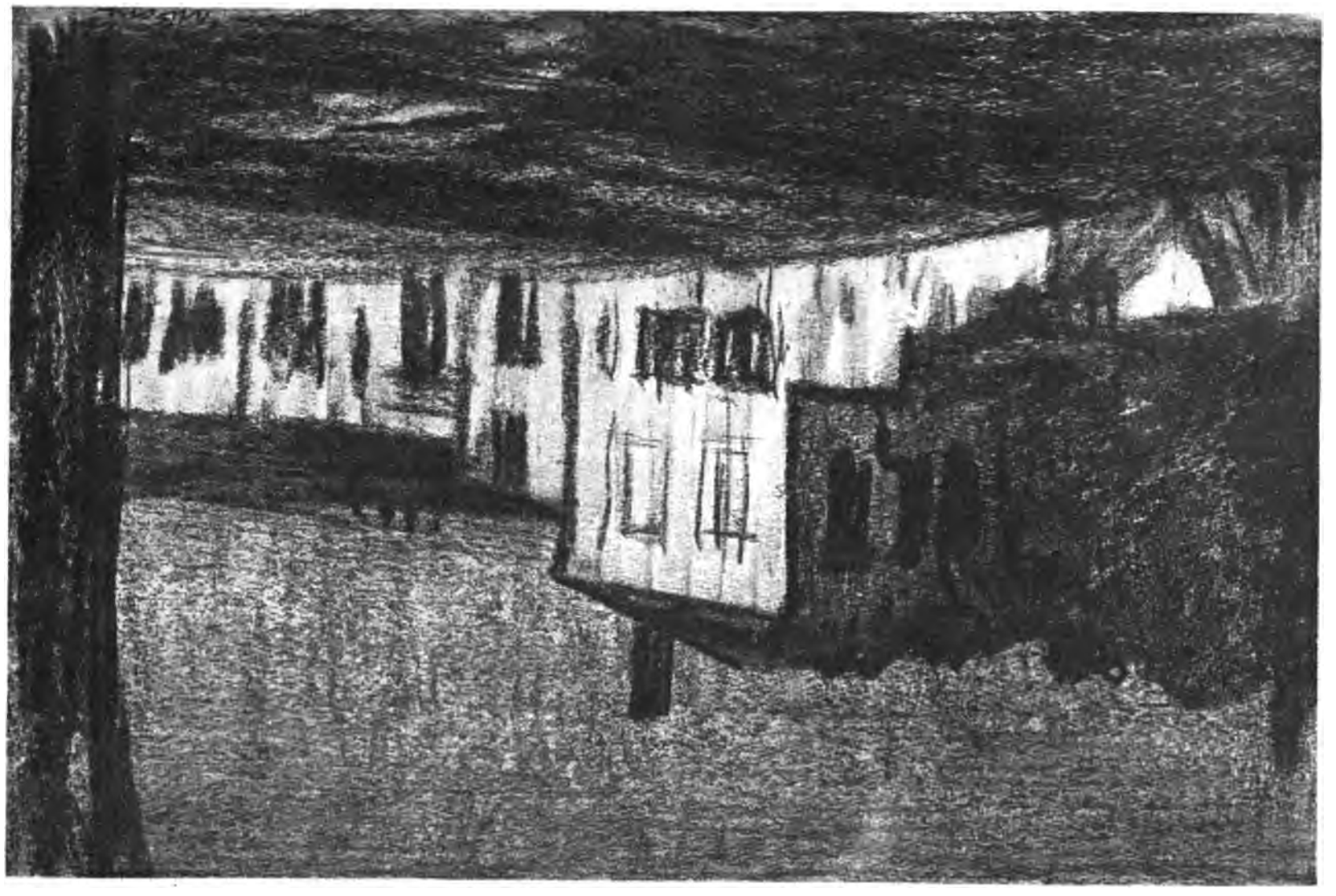
DISEMBARKED TROOPS WAITING TO MARCH OFF

An every-day scene at the French ports where our men land. Whatever may come after, there are few moments so thrilling to an untravelled soldier of the New Army as those in which he awaits the order to march off into the unknown, with all the strange events of war before him.

XVIII

SOLDIERS' BILLETS—MOONLIGHT

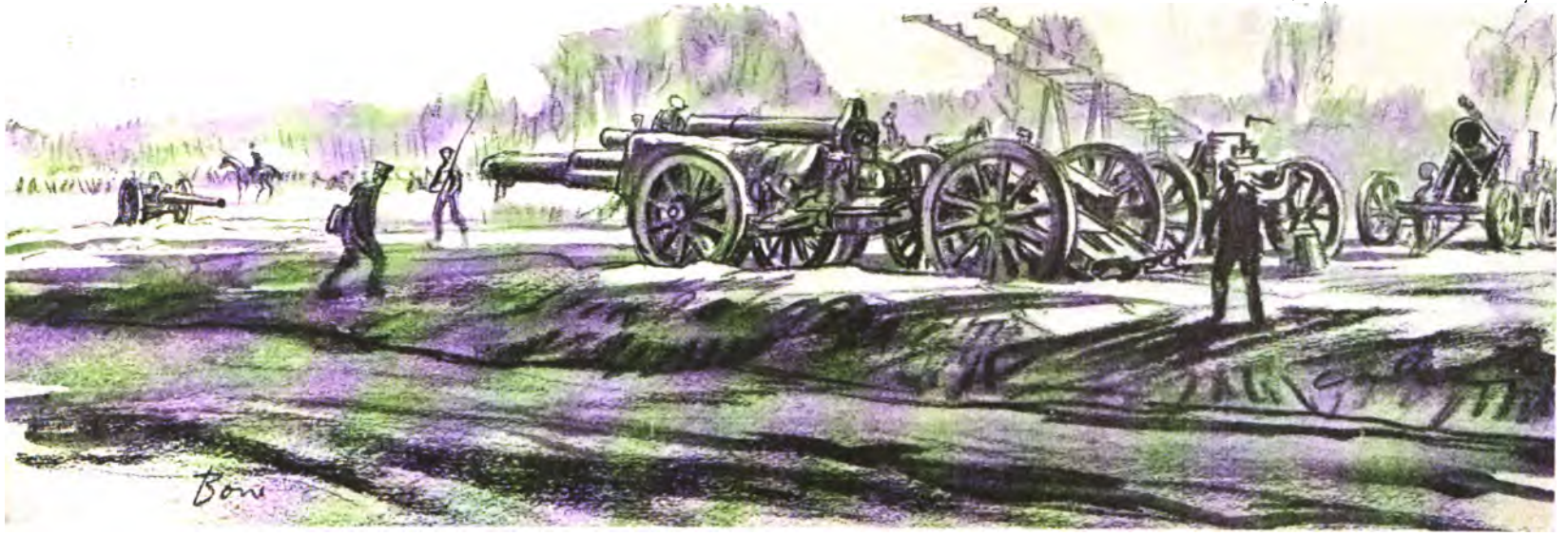
The unusually comfortable quarters of a Company in reserve while other Companies of its Battalion are in the firing and support trenches, two or three miles further up. Reserve billets are more often underground, sometimes in the cellars of ruined houses. A thick covering of ruins above gives complete security against shell fire.



XIX

A GUN HOSPITAL

Many wounded or worn guns, of all calibres, are brought back for treatment to "hospitals" which do not fly the Red Cross. Here are a few invalided "heavies." The gun on the extreme right is the first British 9.2 that came to France. Like most of our heavy guns she has been christened by her crew and bears the punning inscription, "Lizzie, Somme Strafer."

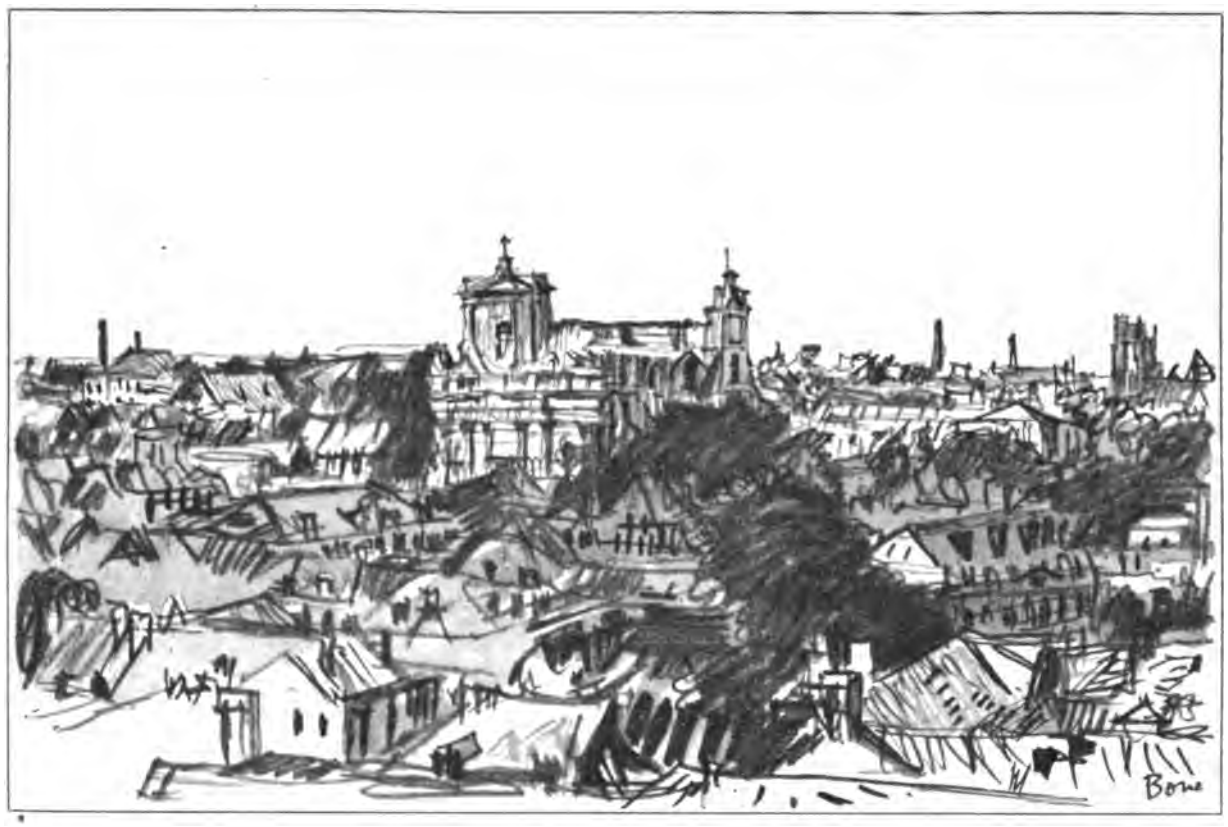


XX

AN OBSERVATION POST

The lower part of the first of the ladders leading up to an artillery observation post in the top of a tall tree. It commanded a large part of the Somme battlefield until the summit ridge was won; every detail of several successful British advances could be watched from the tree-top. The battle has now left it far in the rear, and it is disused.

CORN



THE BATTLE OF ARRAS

FOR a few miles the cornlands of Artois are fenced off by a thin wall of hill from the coalfield of Flanders. The wall juts out East from Bouvigny, high with a level top, like a railway embankment, and then suddenly breaks, eaten through by the little river of Souchez. From the East end of this hill Mr. Bone made four of these drawings. From it almost the whole battlefield of Arras can be seen. In front, on the left, stand the ruins of Angres and Liévin; beyond them, the ruins of Lens. A little more to the right, with a curve of the Souchez valley between, is the little whale-backed Vimy Ridge —a blasted heath coloured in all the dull tones of faded fawn velvet and seamed and cross-seamed with many trenches. More to the right are the ravaged woods of Thélus and Neuville St. Vaast. Still more to the right are two broken stalks of masonry on a hill. With other shattered stonework uniting their bases, they form a rough capital U. They are the ruins of the monastery church of Mont St. Eloi. Beyond them, on a clear day, may be seen, gleaming white, the broken stones of the tower and nave of Arras Cathedral.

Turning again towards the left, you see, north of Lens, a wide flat, with no visible end and no special features except the many pyramids of shale at pit-heads and the many pit villages with their strictly parallel

rows of red roofs. On this level floor is the salient of Loos. Loos itself, Bully Grenay, the Double Crassier, Hulluch and Haisnes, are all within sight. So is Hill 70, outside the salient and looking down on it. Looking once more to your front, due Eastward over the shoulder of the Vimy Ridge, you see a blue expanse of plain, with the towers of Douai far out in it; still further away, on the right of this plain, there rise gentle slopes, the last outward ripples of the disturbance which, at its centre, raised the Ardennes. The blue expanse is the main plain of the Low Countries, the shallow plate-like basin of the lazy Scheldt, where half of Western Europe's modern battles were fought—Jemappes and Oudenarde and Ramillies, Ligny, Quatre Bras and Waterloo.

An hour before dawn on April 9th the old front line could be traced from this hill. It was marked out, from furlong to furlong, by the occasional rise and burst of a little ball of fire sent up by some British or German sergeant to light up the section of enemy parapet watched by his own platoon. The morning was dark, the moon just setting behind heavy clouds, and the straggling frontier of flares showed up pretty well for more than twelve miles. It passed through a suburb of Arras and came on between the two black serrations made on the sky-line by the remains of the woods of Thélus and Neuville St. Vaast, mounted obliquely the western slant of Vimy Ridge and then dropped down and crossed the Souchez River, rounded the outskirts of Angres and Liévin and went away to the far North-East in the sickle-like curve of the bulging British advance beyond Loos in the autumn of 1915.

There were at that moment only the usual nightly sights and sounds of the Western Front. Up and down it a few guns were grumbling. From somewhere below there would come a short run of the woodpecker taps of a Lewis gun; nothing more than these routine notes of alertness —so long an affair of routine that on men's ears out here they come at last to have an effect of indolence, or at least of repose. With nothing more doing than that, you seem to feel the war taking its rest, as in quiet places in England you seem to hear the earth breathing in its sleep when the only sound at night is the bark of a distant fox, or an owl calling.

Ten minutes later the battle began. No storm ever broke with such suddenness. At one second there was that calm; at the next our whole front was one shimmering line of little splashes of fire, all close together. They might have been all turned on from one switch. But from that moment each had a switch of its own, and flashed on and off as if some quick wrist were turning and re-turning it for a wager. The whole line danced like a shaken string of diamonds with the constant ignition and extinction and reignition of each of its constituent jets of flame. It lasted like that for some seconds and then another line of fires,

wider apart from one another, broke out along the German front trench —thick geysers of turbid light leaping up forty or fifty feet, with black objects in it, like "golden rain" fireworks magnified. A few seconds more and a third line of fires, signal rockets from the endangered enemy line, rushed up high above these others and filled a stratum of upper air with drifting stars, white, red and green, as though a twelve-mile line of sinking ships were crying out at the same instant for help.

There was no sound at first. It made its way up the hill slowly, broken and blurred by a rough western gale that had risen towards dawn and now tore one of our captive balloons from its moorings and whirled it up into the clouds, out of sight in a moment. When the sound came it seemed old and of little account; each move in the rushing drama below had already been told in that more articulate language of legible fire. The darkness hid nothing; it merely served as the page, the darker the better, on which the flashing letters were written. When morning broke we knew where to look; it seemed as if we had, all this time, been watching our men. There they were, in a flexible line, ascending the opposite hill, between the second and third German systems of trenches, with that strange air of leisure which makes a modern infantry charge foreign to all old notions of war; the guardian cloud of smoke marching before them; the men, miniatured by distance, ambling steadily on with arms at the trail, each moving speck in visibly sensitive touch with the specks on its right and left, so that a gap was no sooner made by an enemy shell than the lips of the wound drew together and the line was whole again and still moved steadily on. Then the rifles would come to the guard and the even line would leap suddenly forward into the thinning smoke that hung over the next German trench.

It was a blank dawn, without colour or warmth; wild squalls of sleet whipped the back of one's neck; frightened rooks were blowing about the sky; close overhead our aeroplanes were riding up and down on the gale, tossing like boats on a rough sea while they waited for light to get out to their work. In all the wild landscape of desert and ruins, pelted and lashed with tempest and rain, the only glow was in the eager minds of our men. A whistled tune came up the hill from some reserve battalion moving up on the shadowy road below :—

"O! Ho! Ho! I *am* surprised at you."

One recognised them, equable and keen and gay, beguiling the length of the way into battle as they had beguiled the last miles of a score of route marches over the Wiltshire downs.

G. H. Q., FRANCE,
May, 1917

I

AT BAPAUME

Even in the haste of their departure the enemy found time to make an absolute ruin of the pleasant little country town of Bapaume, which had already suffered much injury from our shell fire. Not one house is habitable. The Germans seem to have taken special pains to demolish or deface little household goods of no military importance, such as mirrors, carved furniture and small ornaments. These works of charity were completed even in places where the time necessary for strictly military demolition work, such as the felling of telegraph posts, appears to have run short. When the artist was drawing this abomination of desolation, he asked a British soldier what he thought of it all. "Well, sir," he answered, with the cautious moderation of the North-countryman, "it seems to me that the Germans have made a mess of this place."

II

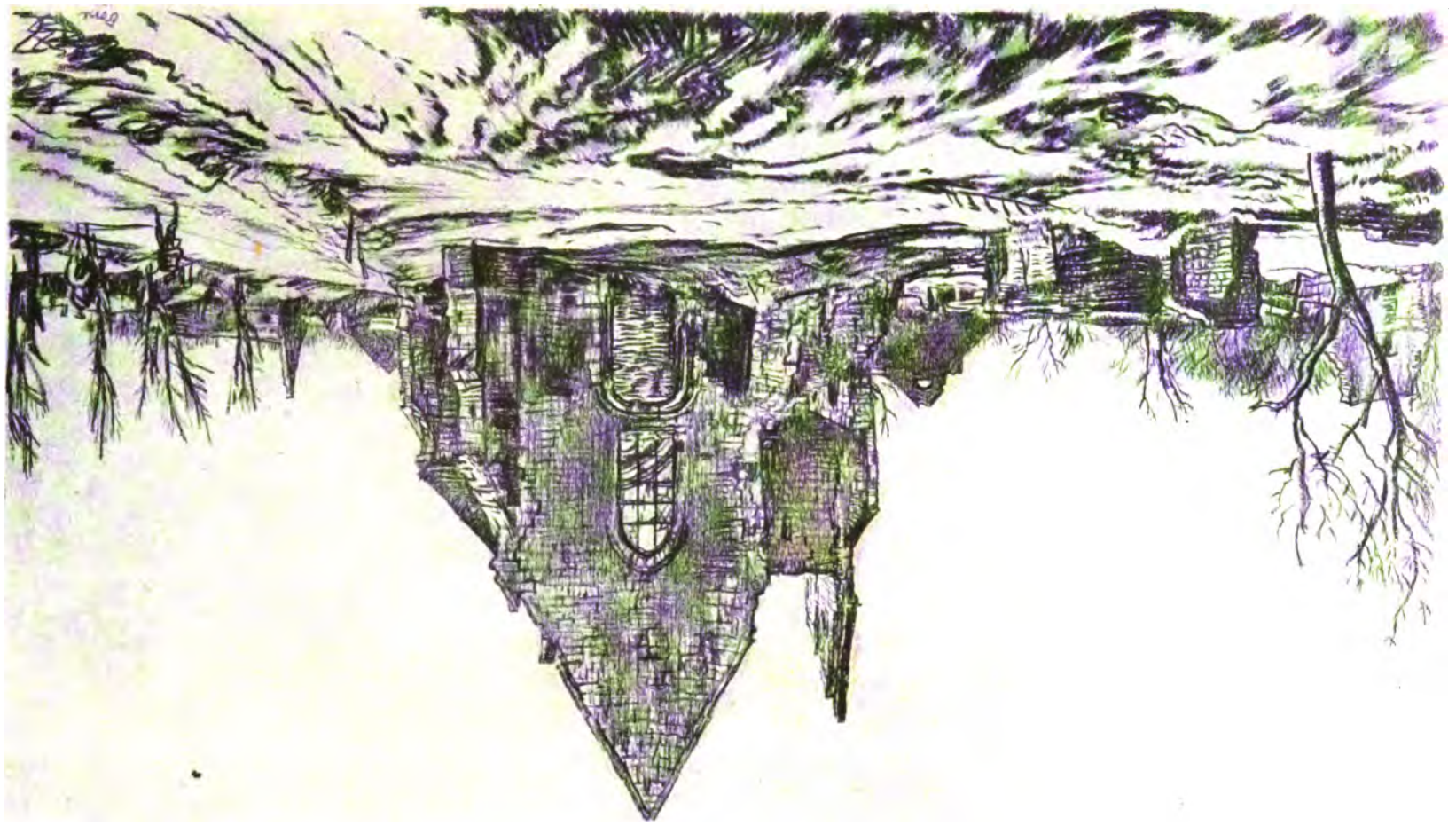
THIEPVAL

The drawing shows some of the most hard-fought acres of the whole Somme battlefield. The hole in the foreground admits to part of the vast cellarage of what was Thiepval Château. In the left distance is the village of Mesnil, on a partly wooded hill, with the Ancre visible below it. British communication trenches, in rear of Beaucourt and Beaumont Hamel, are seen on the right.

III

THE ROAD TO PÉRONNE

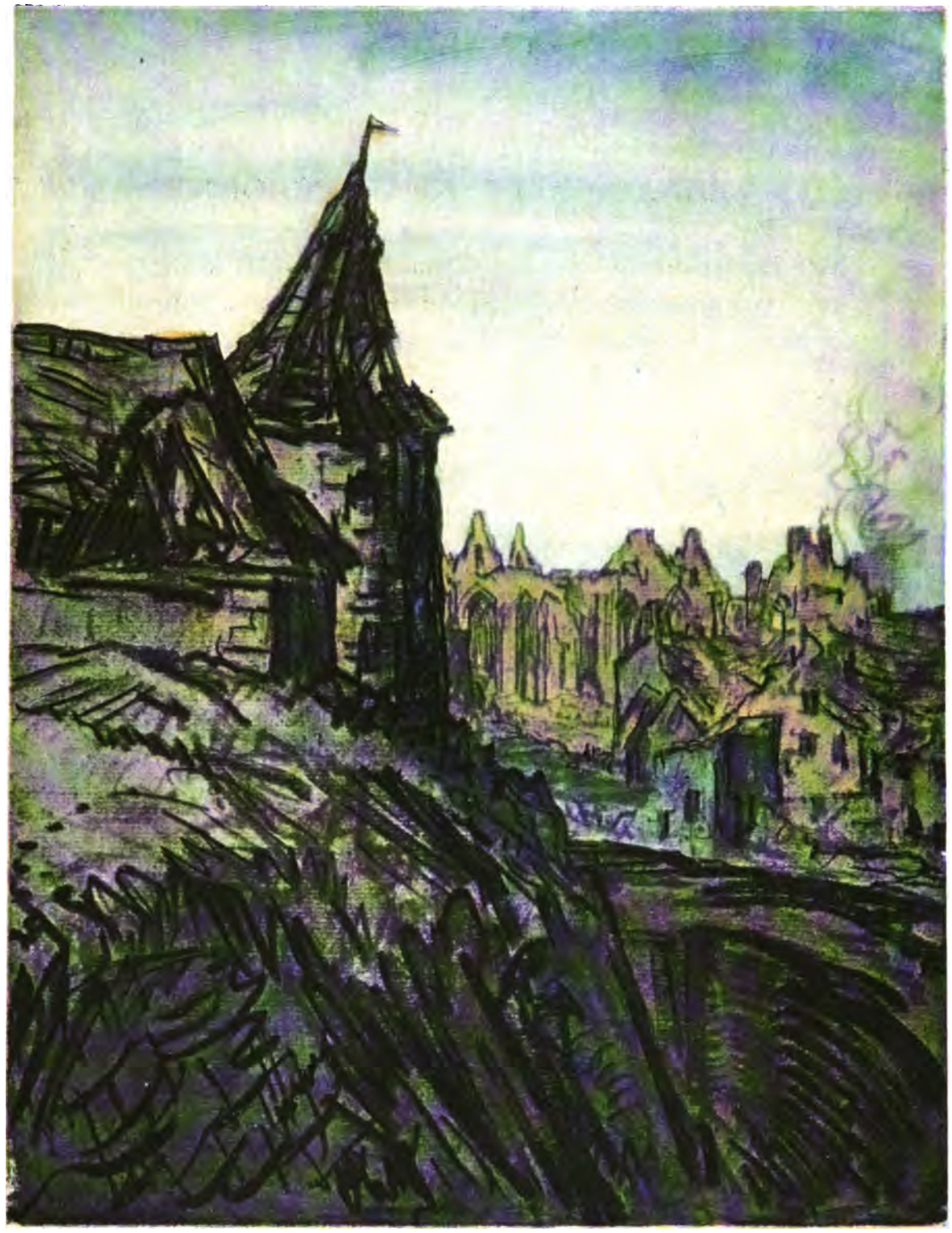
A point on the long straight road across the Santerre from near Amiens to Péronne. Before the German retreat of this year the front line crossed the road about four miles away, in the direction in which the spectator is looking.



IV

THE CASTLE OF PÉRONNE

The drawing was made from the rampart of the sixteenth century castle known to British readers through Scott's description, in "Quentin Durward," of a few of the incidents of its tempestuous history. The castle is a wonderful example of the small fortified palace of its time. Round its main courtyard are residences—some of later date—for the higher ranks of the garrison, and a steep circular road, winding round the inside of the rampart, leads up to a miniature street of soldiers' quarters on its summit. The castle, though battered by shell-fire, is not past restoration. In the background are the more hopeless ruins of the Church of St. Jean.



V

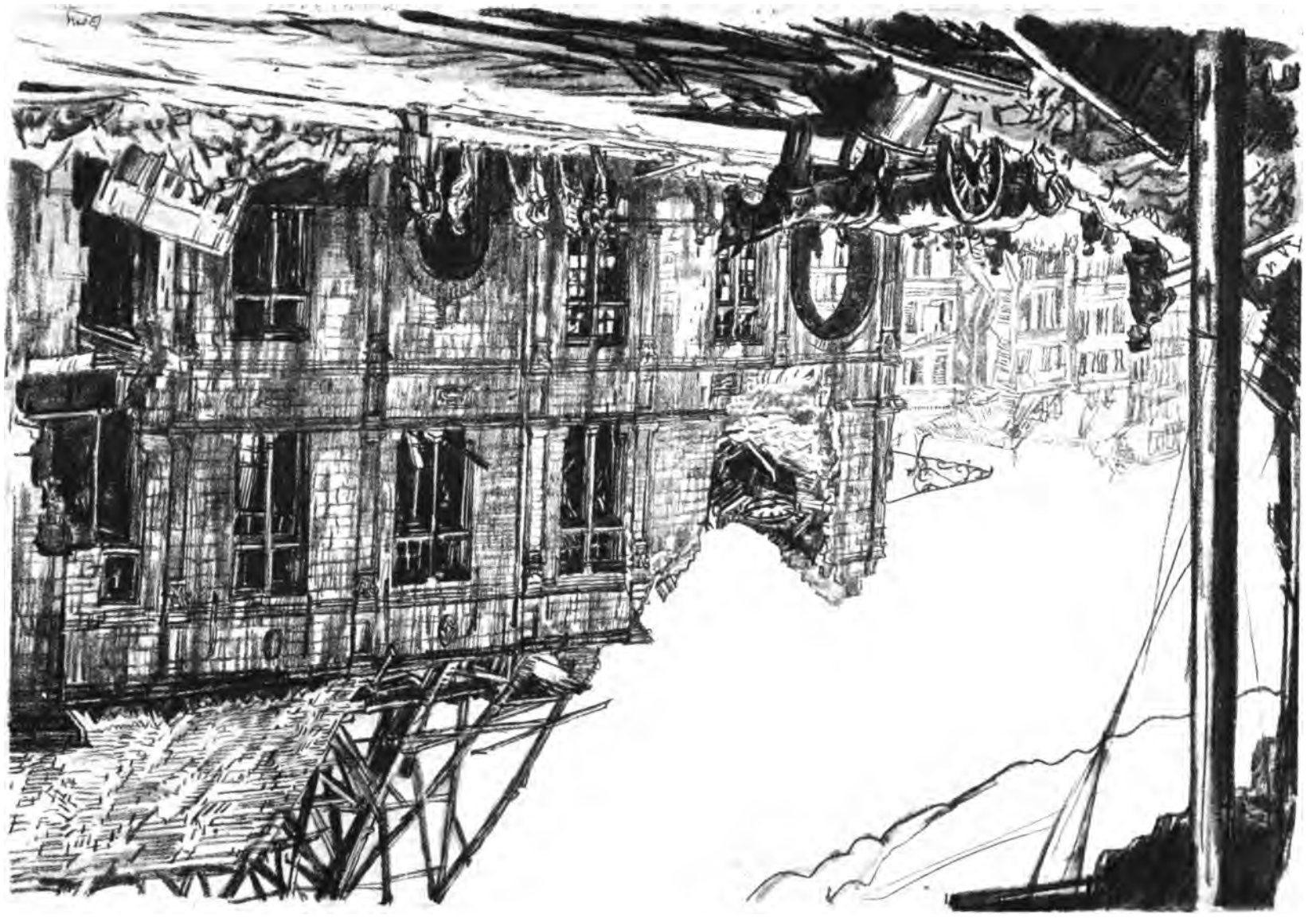
A RUINED VILLA NEAR PÉRONNE

The shattered villa was old and well built, and its strongly-knit brickwork bent in places, like a sheet of metal, without breaking. In the foreground is seen a shell-hole.

VI

THE TOWN HALL OF PÉRONNE

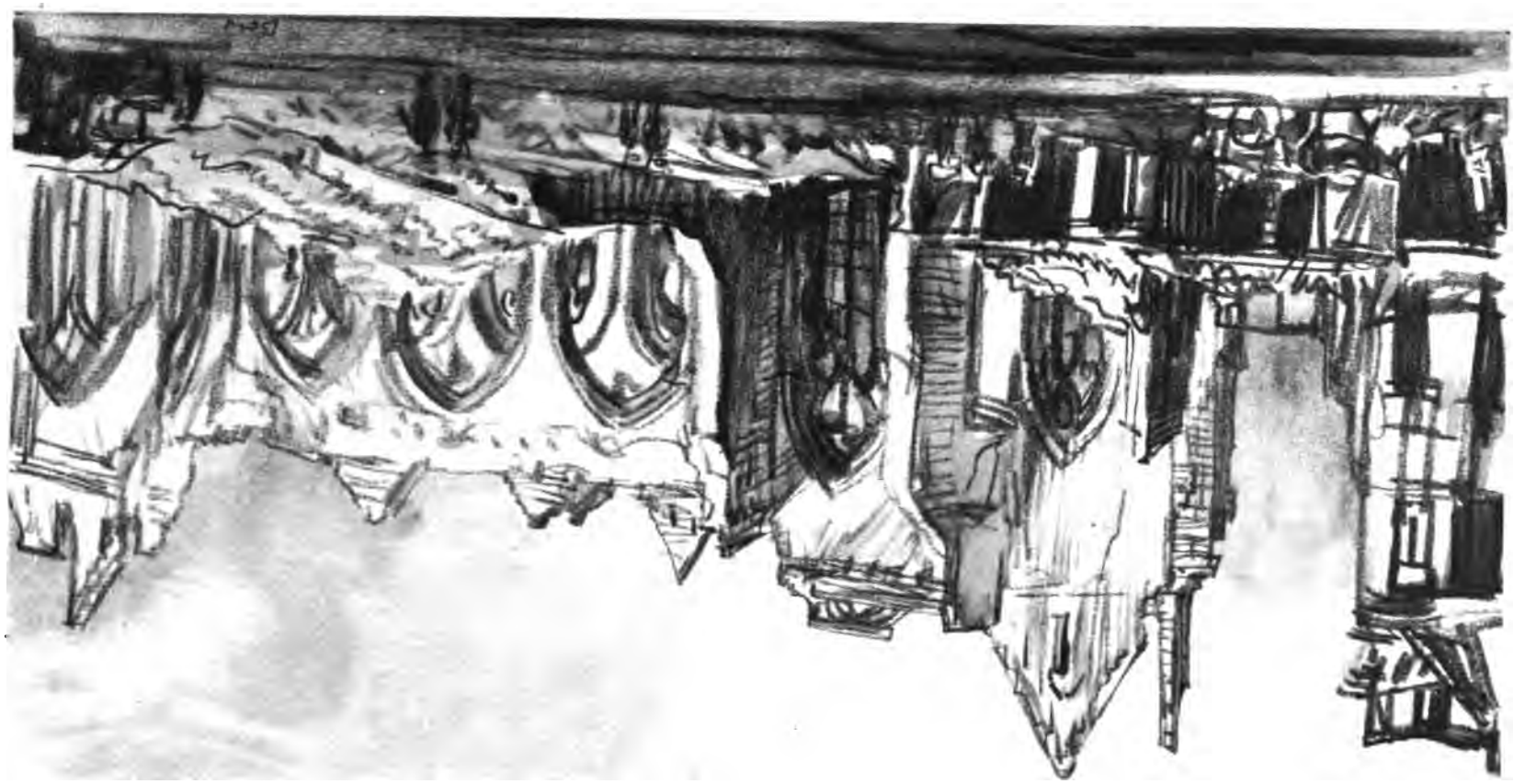
The South wing, the oldest part, of the fine Renaissance Town Hall of Péronne. Among the reliefs decorating the façade may be seen the salamander badge of Francis I. The broken town clock is seen lying among the ruins of a clock tower that rose from the left corner of the roof. Before the Germans looted it, the building housed a fine collection of Gallic coins, Roman bronzes, Frankish antiquities, and early printed books. Nothing is left but a few tumbled books.



VII

RUINS OF THE CHURCH AT PÉRONNE

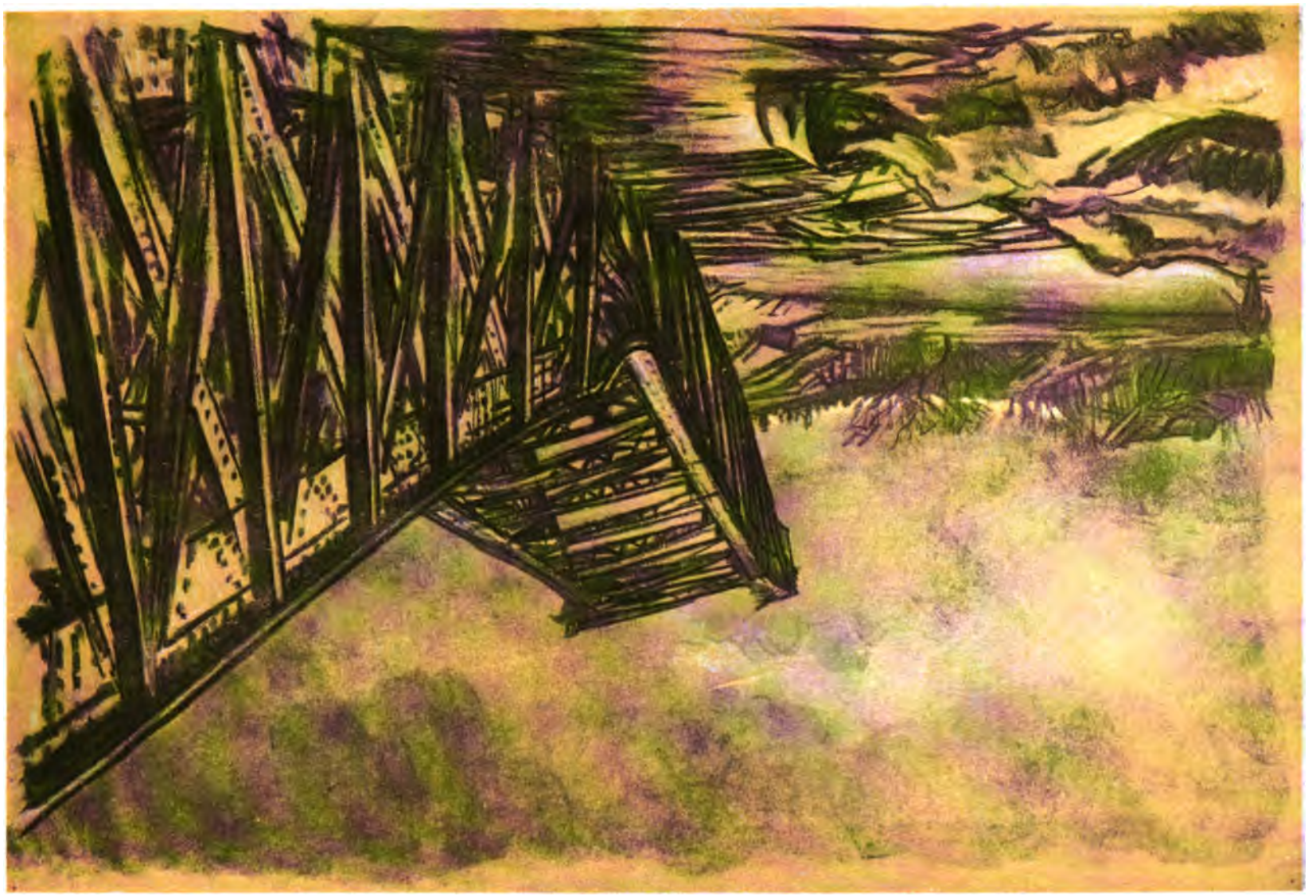
The ruins of St. Jean, the chief church of Péronne, an early sixteenth century building with a beautiful western façade. The interior was rich in fine metal work and good stained and painted glass. It may have suffered some damage from Allied shells, but its final demolition by the Germans was clearly deliberate, for the ruined walls have been blown outwards. Behind the altar there was a sculptured relief, with many small figures, and the head of every one has been broken off with a precision that cannot be mistaken for the random havoc of shell-fire.



VIII

WRECKED RAILWAY BRIDGE OVER THE SOMME AT PÉRONNE

A specimen of legitimate demolition by a defeated and retreating army. There is a moral world of difference between attempts of this kind to delay a pursuing enemy and the base spite which systematically destroys little household ornaments and cottage gardens.



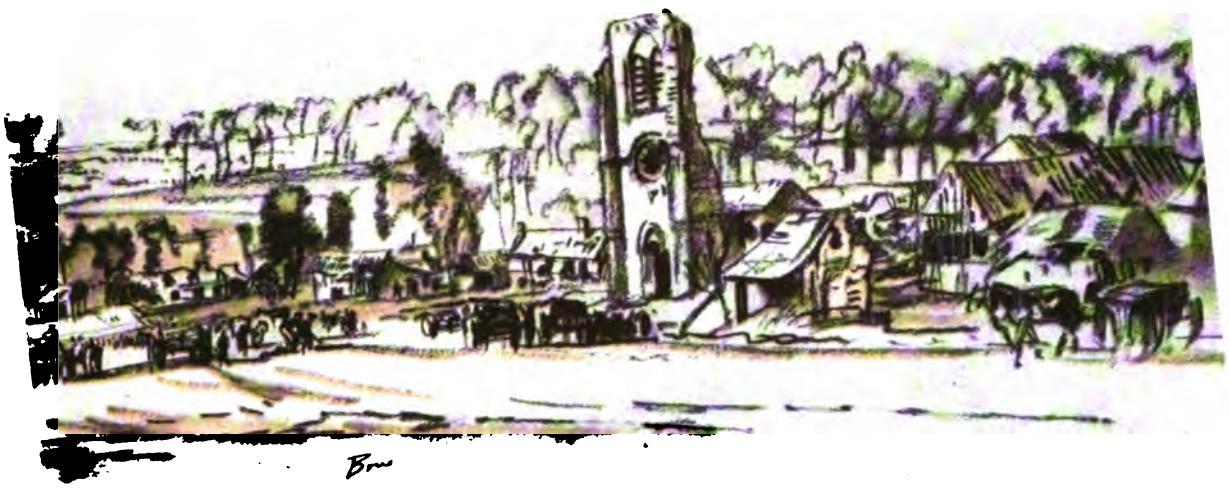
IX (a and b)

A RUINED VILLAGE IN FRANCE

A village less completely destroyed than its neighbours. It is possible that some of its houses may be repaired. The church had a rose window in its West front and was of rather more ambitious design than is usual in a little Picardy village. It is destroyed beyond restoration, nothing remaining except a fragment of the West tower. Our advances of last year and this have now placed the village out of range of the German guns.

A REST BY THE WAY

A remarkable diversity of attitude can be achieved on a hot day by a company of infantry in which every man is trying to get the maximum of repose out of the hourly halt of ten minutes.



X

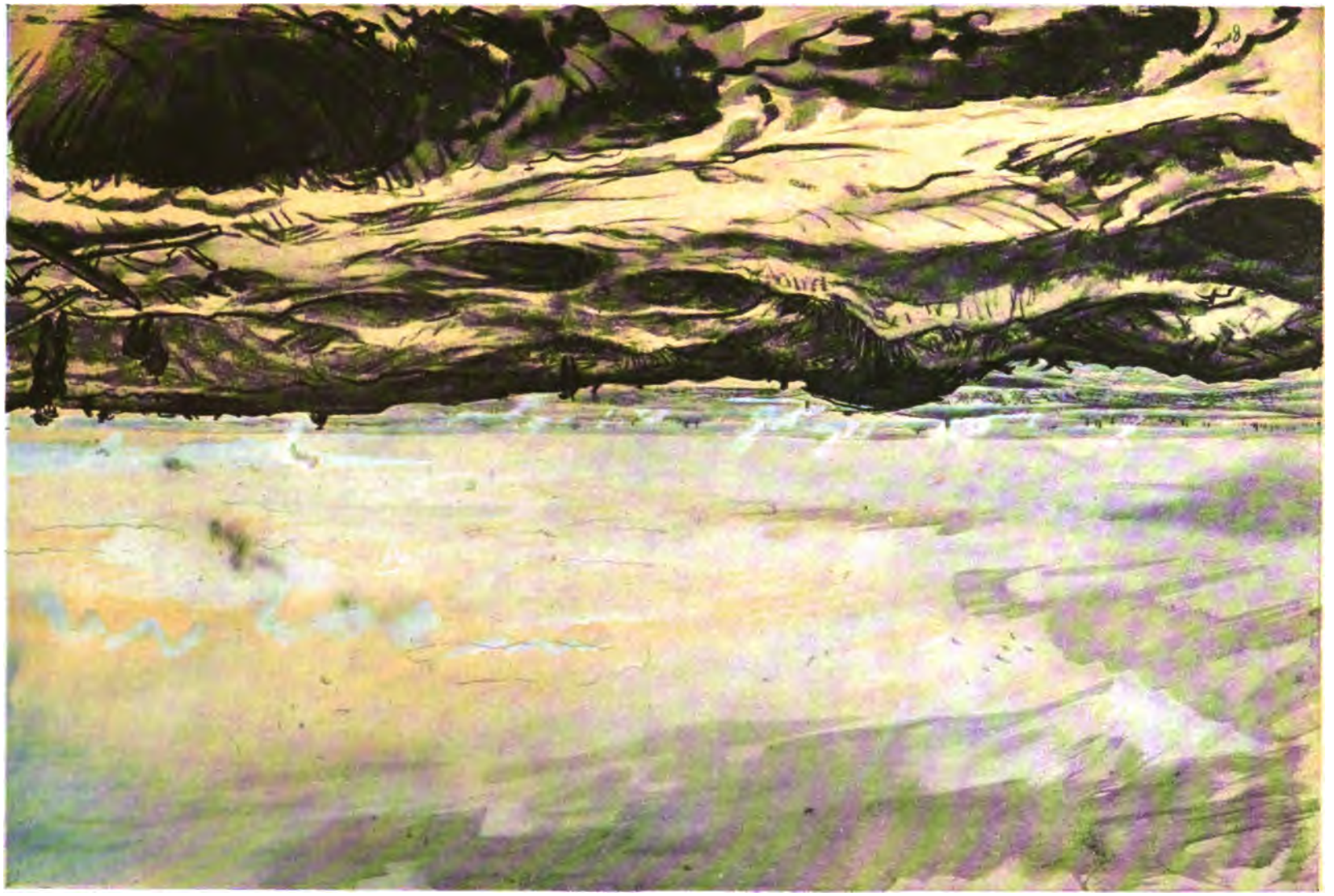
DISTANT VIEW OF THE VIMY RIDGE

The ridge is seen, on the sky-line, from near Louez, about five miles away south-westwards. On the left end of the ridge is La Folie Wood, which has since been almost completely destroyed by shells. Below the wood are the trenches that the Germans held when the Battle of Arras began.

XI

THE FIGHT FOR LENS, FROM NOTRE DAME DE LORETTE

During the British attack on Lens the enemy have been burning the town by degrees. In the drawing the smoke of some of these fires may be seen amidst the bursts of British and German shells round the town. In the foreground are a few of the shell-holes left on the ridge of Notre Dame de Lorette by the battle which the French fought for it in May, 1915. Lens, dimly seen through the smoke, is a straggling modern mining town with a small ancient town, formerly fortified, at its core. This ancient town endured attack and capture many times from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century. In the obscurity beyond it is the plain of Douai.



XII

DISTANT LENS, FROM NOTRE DAME DE LORETTE

The East end of the ridge of Notre Dame de Lorette, a view-point described in the Introduction. The ridge is five miles long, with steep sides and a level top. In the autumn of 1914 it was all in the enemy's hands. In the following winter the French gained a footing on it, and in May, 1915, they won the whole ridge by thirteen days' fighting of extreme severity. In the foreground are seen the remains of old French trenches and dug-outs, and many shell-holes ; in some places the ground is still littered with the wreckage of the battle of two years ago.

XIII

THE LOOS SALIENT AND BURNING LENS

The high ground on the right of the drawing is the North side of the ridge of Notre Dame de Lorette. On its left, in the distance, is seen the smoke of incendiary fires lit by the Germans in Lens, where great explosions were to be heard from the time when our attack on its outskirts began. More to the left, on the plain below, may be picked out the villages of Aix-Noelette, Grenay, Bully Grenay, and the more distant Loos.

XIV

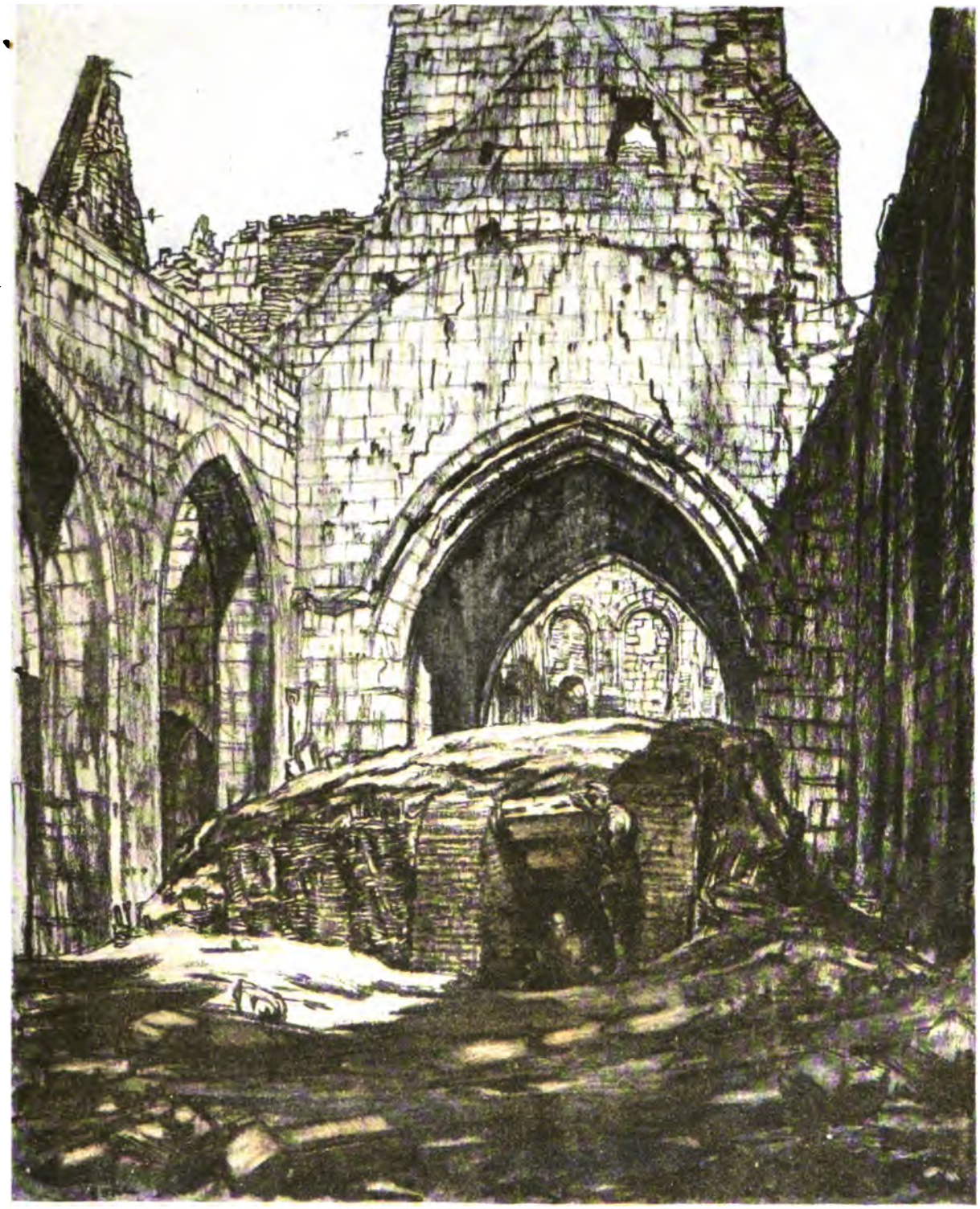
A ROAD TO THE FRONT
A CAMP AT A BASE

The snug camp, with its sylvan background and its general air of order and security, is in fine contrast with the road to the front and its surroundings, where everything is either a fragment or a makeshift. Trench war has its glories, but they are not those of a pageant, and nothing could well be more free from "pomp and circumstance" than a battlefield of to-day, with a warren of squalid burrows in place of the "tented field," and tangled skeins of telephone wire instead of gallopers, and with everything that might be effective in colour or striking in form avoided by both armies as if it were poison.

XV

FOUCAUCOURT

The parish church of a village on the dead-straight ancient road across the Santerre plateau from Amiens eastward to the Somme at Brie and on to Vermand. On the floor of the ruined church is seen the entrance to a French dug-out. Foucaucourt was a mile and a half behind the French front when the Battle of the Somme began.



XVI

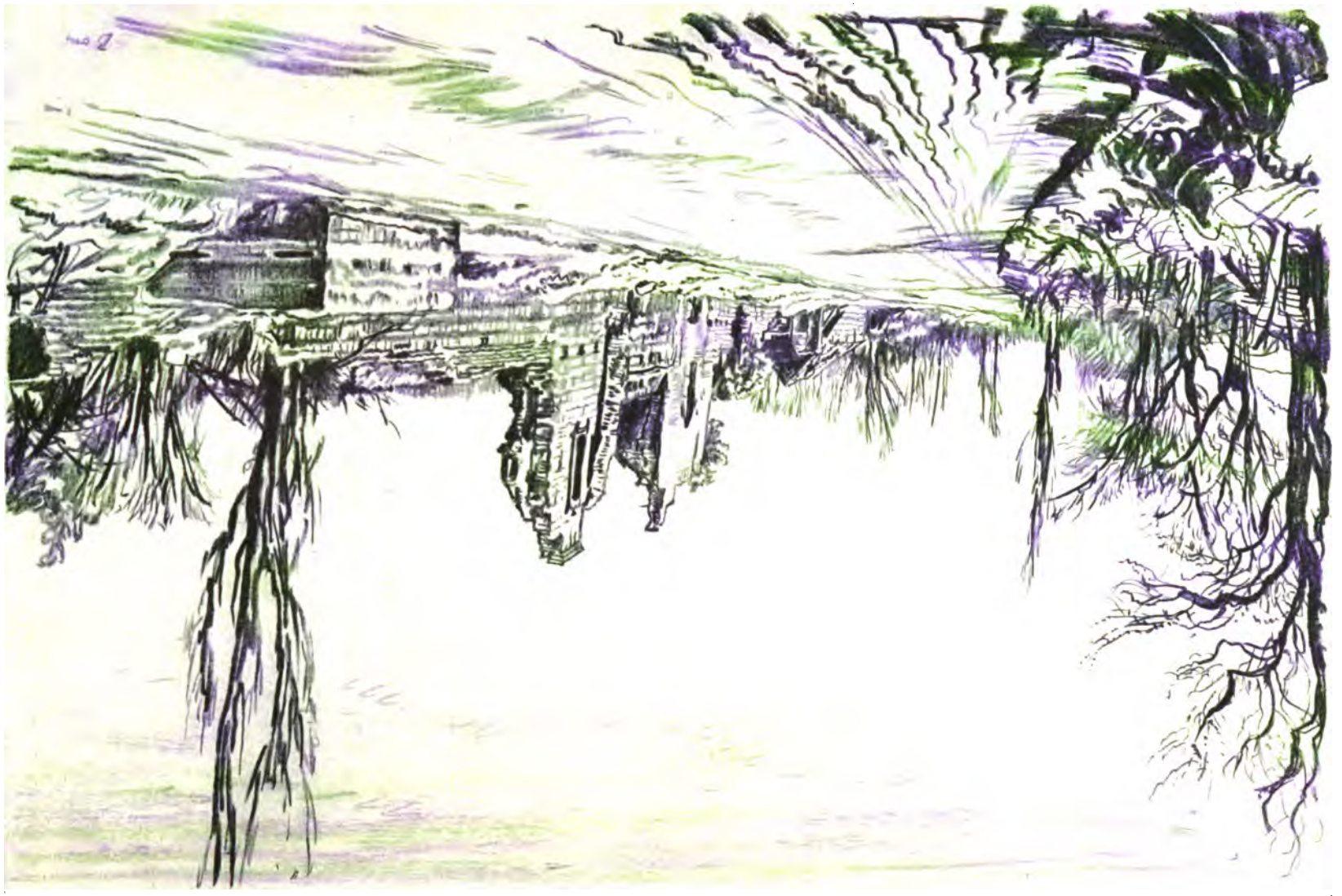
THE PIT OF MOUQUET FARM

All that is left of the famous solitary farm, on the ridge between Thiepval and Martinpuich, which was fought for as desperately in 1916 as Pozières Windmill, a mile or so on its east. The earth under and round the farm had been turned by the enemy into a maze of tunnels which enabled snipers and machine guns to emerge, apparently from the bare earth, and to vanish into it again, at unexpected places. The "pit" is the ruin of a great cistern. With its roof there has collapsed a dug-out which had been made over it. Aveluy Wood is seen in the distance.

XVII

THE GRAND MANOIR DE LIHONS

Lihons, already shattered by last year's fighting, was just behind the French front as it stood at the beginning of this year. The Grand Manoir was a building of some consequence, and of good design, standing beside the road. In the foreground on the right is a small fort, with wide slits for traversing machine guns. They commanded the main cross roads of the village. On the left there remains a tangle of barbed wire.



XVIII

THE CHURCH OF LIHONS

An example of the desolation which the war has made of the Eastern half of the Santerre, the rich grain-growing plateau which lies south of the Somme between Corbie and Péronne.

XIX

THE PRIEST'S GARDEN: SPRING

About a mile behind the French front line as it ran before the Battle of the Somme. The village is now out of range of the German guns, and this spring the shell-blasted tree in the foreground has begun to put out new twigs, and crocuses and tulips are coming up among the unexploded "dud" shells lying in the parish priest's garden. In the foreground an old French trench can be seen.

XX

A SOLDIERS' CEMETERY

An improvised cemetery behind a part of the front which was held by the French during the Battle of the Somme and is now held by British troops. The graves are marked by rough crosses or by the rifle or steel helmet of the dead man. Shell-fire has disturbed many of the graves. On the right of the ruined house is seen the entrance to a dug-out.

TRENCH SCENERY.

IN one of these drawings Mr. Bone gives a rousing glimpse of trench life at a moment of action. These are its moments of transfiguration, when all the glow of courage, that has been banked down and husbanded through months of waiting and guarding, bursts, at a word of command, into flame. The rest of trench life is work, contrivance and observation. It has been called monotonous. But, for any man who has not lost the heart of a boy, it has the relish of an endlessly changeful outdoor adventure, a game with the earth and the weather, as well as with the more official enemy.

No two points in an Allied front trench are wholly alike. Certain general patterns there are, but no facsimiles. Each traverse or bay has a look of its own; it is personal and expresses, as Robinson Crusoe's stockade might have done, the nature of some man or men making shift, each after his kind, to put up what they could, in the shortest time, between their bodies and danger. A German firing trench is less various. In it you seem to see the minds of a few large and able contractors; in ours the minds of thousands of good campers-out. To put it in another way, the German trench has, in some measure, the quality of a long street built, well enough, to a single design; ours possesses the charm of a

strip of coast or a long country lane, where nature or man has made every indentation and turn a surprise, and each farmer has made gates and hedges to his own mind.

The line goes through wonderful places and charges them with singular thrills of romance. It has made windmills famous as forts, and brought herons into the suburbs of cities. In one place it runs across water and land so intermixed that the sentries of both armies are upon little islands crowned with breast-works like grouse butts ; you see them, when the winter evening falls, standing immobile, waist-deep in mist, each man about forty yards from his enemy. Men have stood there, turn by turn, for two years and a half, moving softly and whispering as if in a church, till the shyest of wildfowl have learnt to treat the surrounding marsh as their own, and the only sound is of wild duck and snipe astir between the muzzles of two nations' loaded rifles, snipe safe among the snipers. At more than one place the two front lines converge until each sentry knows that he is within a gentle bomb's throw of the enemy. Out of the firing trench, at one of these places, you walk on tiptoe along a short sap that halves this short distance, and from its end you look up at a small heap of rubble—a couple of cart-loads—and know that some German is cautiously listening, like you, on its further side.

Those are the cramped and contorted parts of the front. A few miles away it will straighten and loose itself out ; you see it run free, in great, easy curves, up the slopes of wide moorlands, the two front lines drawn apart almost three hundred yards. Each is a double band of colour ; the white ribbon of its dug chalk and the broader rust-brown ribbon of its tangled wire stand out clear against the shabby velveteen grey of the heath. Here there is less of thrill and more of ease in trench life ; by day the sentries peer, hour by hour, into the baffling mist that is woven across their sight by our own and the enemy's wire ; it is like trying to see through low and leafless, but thick, undergrowth. By night the wire makes, to the sentry's eye, a middle stratum of opaque dark grey, between the full blackness of the earth below it and the more penetrable obscurity of the night air above. But the darkness is never trusted for long. All night each army is sending up rocket-like lights to burst and hang like arc lamps in the air over the firing trench of the other. From a commanding point you can see, at any moment of any night, scores of these ascending rockets, each like a line drawn on the dark with a pencil of flame, arching over to intersect each other near the zenith of their flight, incessantly tracing and re-tracing the lines of a Gothic nave over all No Man's Land, from the Alps to the sea. All night, too, there

is a kind of pulse of light in the sky, along the whole front, from the flash of guns. From the trenches the flash itself can seldom be seen, but the sky winks and winks from moment to moment with the spread and contraction of a trembling radiance like summer lightning.

At most parts of the line a man in the front trench is cut off from landscape. To look at a tree behind the enemy's lines may be to give a mark to a sniper hidden in its boughs. By day you see the upper half of the dome of the sky, and, through loopholes, a few yards of rough earth or chalk, then the nebulous wire and, through its thin places, perhaps a few uniforms, blue, grey or brown, lying beyond, among the coarse grass and weeds. At night you see all the stars well, and on moonlight nights, if you walk the trench softly, you can watch strange friezes sharply silhouetted on the sky line of the parapet, the wars and loves of capering rats, " flouting the ivory moon." Whole choirs of larks may be heard : neither cannon nor small arms seem to alarm them ; and most of the ground has its own hawk to quarter it daily.

To men put on this short allowance of natural sights and sounds it is an extraordinary pleasure to find in the rear of their trench a clean rivulet, such as often occurs in chalk land, where the surface water filters rapidly in and comes out at the bases of slopes like so many crystal springs. But the greatest of all trench delights is the re-discovery, every year, of the sun. Some day in March it is suddenly found to have a miraculous warmth, and everybody off duty comes out like the bees and stands about in the trench, sunning his head and shoulders in the tepid rays and adoring—quite inarticulately—and feeling that all's well with the world. A winter in trenches revives, in us children of civilisation, a pre-Promethean rapture of love for the sun ; and the dark nights, in which not a match must be struck, makes us, at any rate, think more highly than ever we did of the moon, which halves the strain of the soldier on guard, and of the stars which guide him back overland to his billet, at a relief, to sleep in Elysium. So, for a man who has all his senses alive and unjaded, the hard and bare life has its compensations. It makes him do without many things ; but it also quickens delight in the things which are at the base of all the rest, and without which there could not have been the incomparable adventure and spectacle of life on the earth.

G. H. Q., France.

February, 1917.

XLI

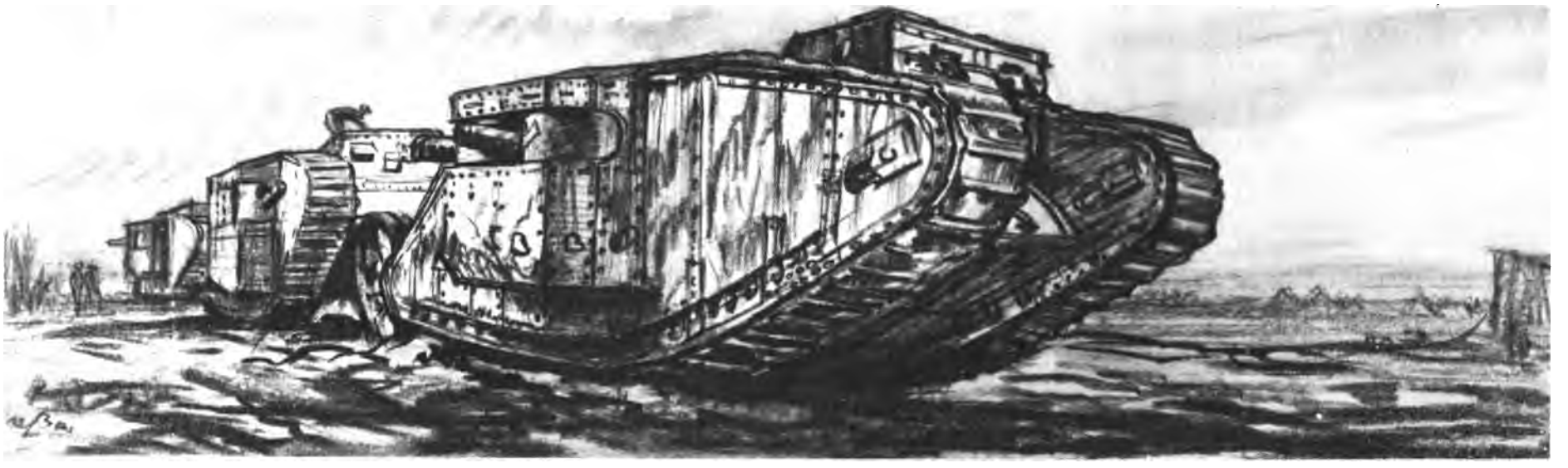
CASSEL

Cassel has no great part in this war. But it has endured ancient sieges; three notable battles have taken its name since 1070; the last of them led to the annexation of Cassel to France in 1678 and gave her a town finely set on a hill amidst lowlands, and equally good to look at and look from. The many windmills about it give Cassel an air of liveliness as you approach, and this cheerful effect is maintained on reaching the main square, drawn by Mr. Bone, with its lightsome spaciousness and comfortable, well-proportioned houses. The eyes of passing Scottish soldiers find a familiar look in the " step " gables of many of Cassel's roofs. One is seen on the right.

XLII

A LINE OF TANKS

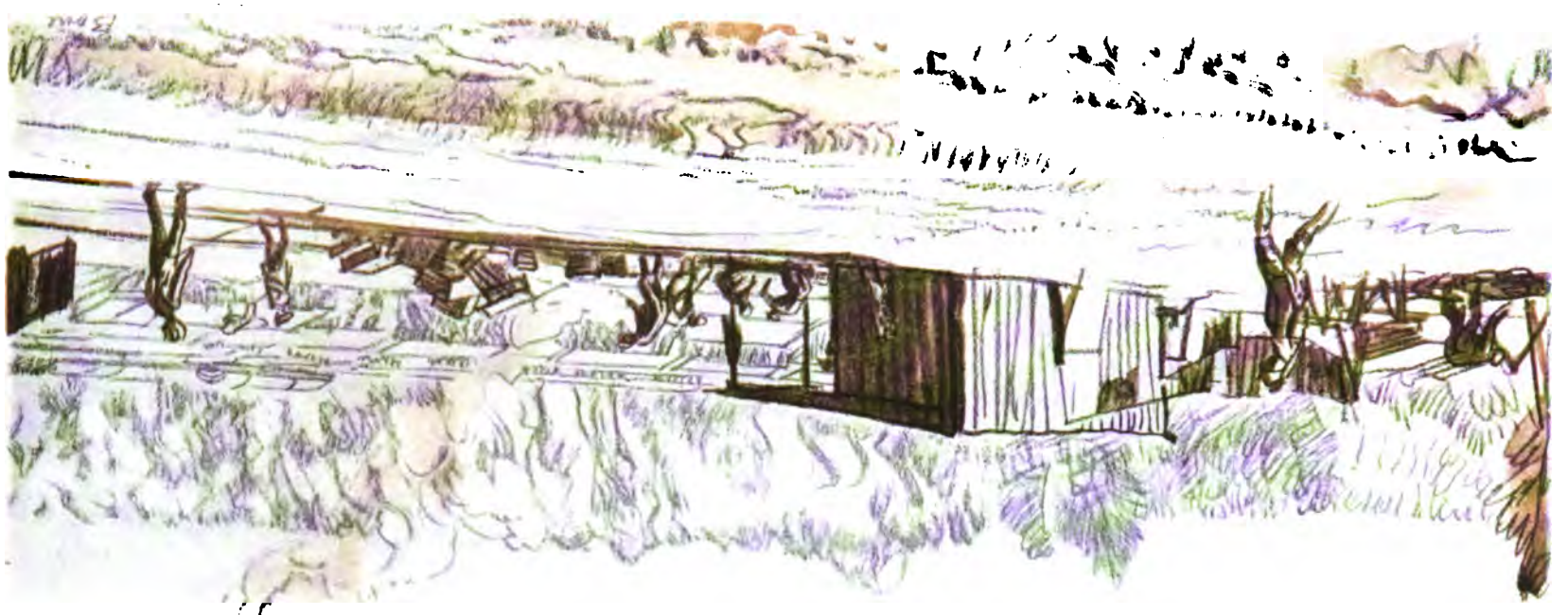
Thanks to the imaginative power of the artist, the " Tank " is here seen not as the British soldier sees it—a friendly giant with lovably droll tricks of gait and gesture—but as it must look to a threatened enemy, the very embodiment of momentum irresistibly grinding its way towards its prey. In the presence of " tanks " as here drawn—though there is no trace of exaggeration in the drawing—the spectator is as a crushed worm and, in fact, finds there is more force in that phrase than he knew.



XLIII

A KITCHEN IN THE FIELD

One of the improvements in our field organisation since the early part of the war is the more general provision of hot meals for the men in the front trenches. From cook-houses like the one shown in the drawing, or from travelling field kitchens, the hot stew and tea are brought up the communication trench in dixies, two to a platoon, each dixie being slung from a pole carried on two men's shoulders. The cooks work under shell fire and many have been killed.



XLIV

THE GUN PIT: HARDENING THE STEEL

The drawing shows one of the most thrilling moments in the making of a great gun. The doors of the furnace have just been thrown back and the heated gun tube is about to be lifted by the giant pincers of the crane.

XLV

THE GUN PIT: A GUN JACKET ENTERING THE OIL TANK

The gun jacket shown here has just been heated in the furnace and is about to plunge into its oil bath. The spectacle is always striking, especially at dusk, when the fierce glow of the huge mass of metal seems more brilliant than ever. The passage is made in a few seconds.

XLVI

THE GUN PIT: THE GREAT CLUTCHES OF THE CRANE

The figures in the foreground give a scale by which to judge the size and power of the crane that handles the heavier guns in the gun pit. The tube has now been lifted from the oil tank and waits to be carried back to the gun shop lathes.

XLVII

MOUNTING A GREAT GUN

This is one of the largest guns. At such a scene as its mounting one is always struck by the contrast between the restless stir of the minute figures busy about it and the massive impassivity—for the present—of the thing they have created. "A great gun," it has been said, "is so *sheer*." In a gun shop it dwarfs everything round it and seems the embodiment, at the same time, of immobility and of menace.

XLVIII

"THE HALL OF THE MILLION SHELLS"

A store containing loaded shells of every calibre. All the plant has been made since 1914, in answer to the challenge of German militarism. The railway trucks in the foreground are incessantly filled and refilled from the supplies pouring into the store for dispatch to the front. Women drive the cranes that gather up bunches of shells from any part of the building and lower them, with absolute precision, to their appointed places in the trucks. All handling of shells must be cautious and deliberate, but the work proceeds, without haste and without rest, at a remarkable speed.

XLIX

THE RUINED TOWER OF BÉCORDEL-BÉCOURT

The village of Bécordel-Bécourt is just on the Allies' side of the front line as it was before the Battle of the Somme. It has, therefore, sustained only the German artillery fire, not that of both armies in turn. Hence the survival of this comparatively large fragment of the village church.

L

EMBARKING THE WOUNDED

Sketched at night at a Port of embarkation of the wounded.

Owing to the low tide the "stretcher cases" or "lying wounded" had all to be carried underneath the pier to the level of the hospital ship. This meant very hard work for the stretcher bearers, and one is here seen resting a moment while the previous stretcher is being carefully taken aboard to be lowered by the lift from the deck to the large wards below.

LI (a and b)

MONT ST. ELOI

In the left centre are the tall ruins of the large church of the monastery at Mont St. Eloi, a little hill about five miles north-west of Arras. The hill is a splendid view-point, commanding the Vimy Ridge, the German lines between Neuville St. Vaast and Thelus, the city of Arras itself, the wood of Souchez and the slopes of Notre Dame de Lorette. On the ground for many miles north and north-east of it the French fought with heroic determination in the advances which gained them Carency, Souchez and Notre Dame de Lorette in 1915.

RUINS OF MAMETZ

Mametz must have been one of the pleasantest of the villages on the Somme battlefield. It was built on a gentle slope, facing south, a little way off the dusty main road from Albert to Peronne, and large, shady trees were intermingled with the houses. The drawing shows what was left of the village after its capture in the beginning of July. The tall fragment of the parish church stands in the centre of the drawing.

LII

RUINED TRENCHES IN MAMETZ WOOD

In this one drawing may be seen the face of all the hard-fought woods of the Somme battlefield—Mametz, Fricourt, Bazentin, Delville, Thiepval, Foureaux and St. Pierre Vaast. Everywhere in them all there is the same close network of half-filled trenches, the same bristle of ruined tree trunks, the same litter of the leavings of prolonged fighting at close quarters—bits of broken rifles and bayonets, perforated helmets, unexploded hand grenades, fragments of shell, displaced sand-bags, broken stretchers, boots not quite empty, and shreds of uniform and equipment.

LIII

"THAWING OUT"

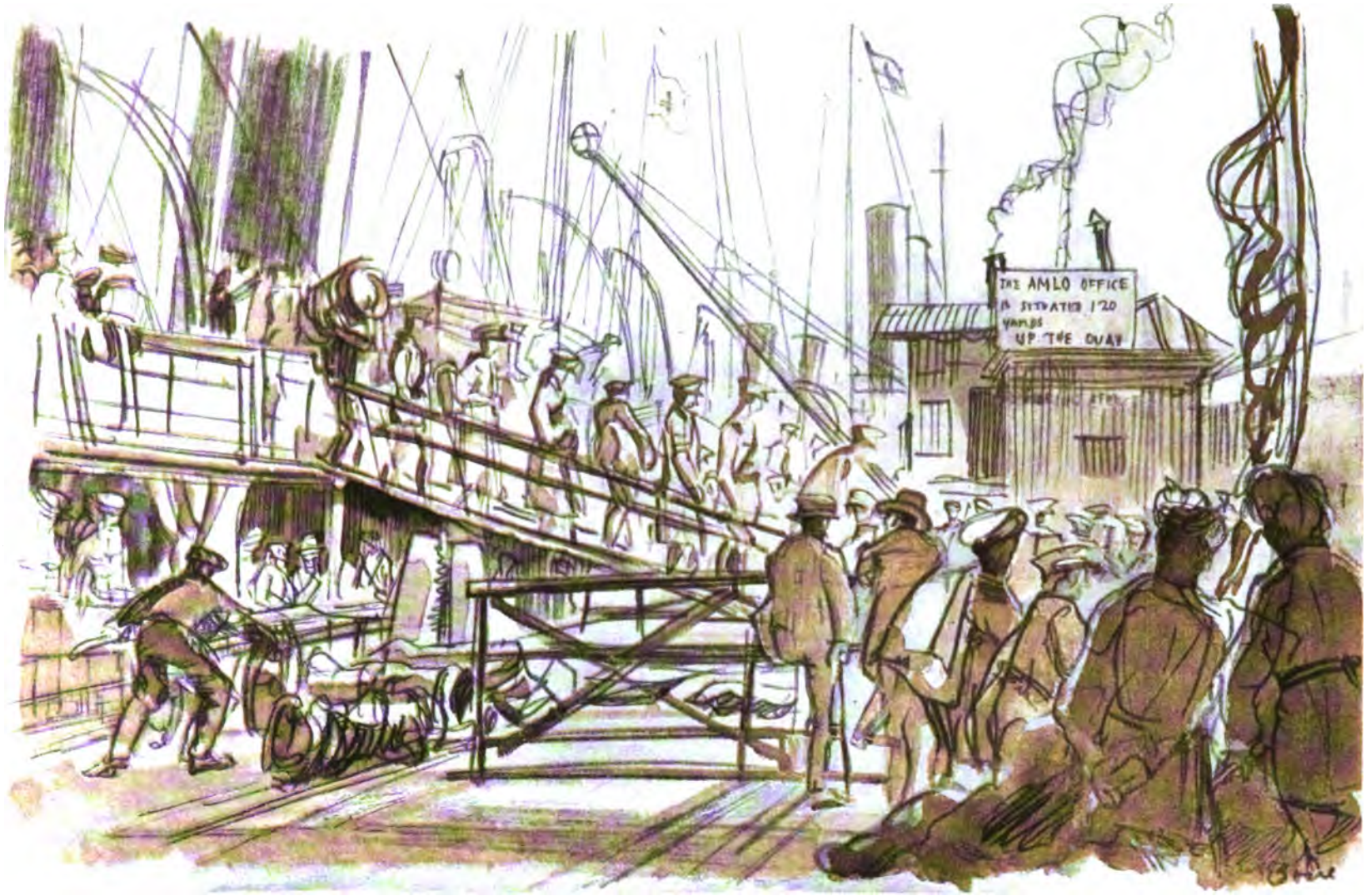
It is always cold in an aeroplane in flight, but in winter the cold endured by airmen is often atrocious, however perfect their equipment. A pilot, who has just come down from his three hours of duty in the air, is here seen "thawing out" over a spirit stove in his tent. Like the thawing of meat taken from cold storage, the process requires some patience.

"Thawing out

LIV

DISEMBARKING

At a base port in France. Officers are disembarking from the upper deck. Many officers arrive under orders simply to "proceed overseas." At the "A. M. L. O. Office" they receive, through the Assistant Military Landing Officer, exact orders where to go and what to do. The men on the lower deck disembark by a second gangway and the boat is cleared in a few minutes.


THE AMLO OFFICE
IS SITUATED 120
YARDS
UP THE QUAY

LV

SLEEPING WOUNDED FROM THE SOMME

Every soldier on active service has more or less of deferred sleep, as well as deferred pay, due to him. If he be wounded he usually recovers a large instalment of both—the former during his first nights and days in hospital, the latter when he leaves the convalescent hospital for the ten days' sick leave given to all wounded or sick men who have been sent to England for treatment.

LVI

DISTANT AMIENS

As you walk southward from Amiens, across meadows and cornfields, the ground rises more gently than the immediate south bank of the Somme, on which the Cathedral and the City stand. Thus the city sinks gradually out of sight until nothing is left but the thin Cathedral spire, looking like the mast of a sunken ship. Mr. Bone's drawing was done from a point, about a mile south of the city, at which the Cathedral roof, the tower of Saint Martin's Church, and one or two factory chimneys are still unsubmerged.

LVII

SCOTTISH SOLDIERS IN A FRENCH BARN

A typical billet for troops on the march or enjoying a "Divisional rest" between two turns of duty in the trenches. An average-sized barn at a French farm will house about thirty men. If the straw be deep and the roof sound it makes better quarters than anything but a good bedroom. Its chief drawback in the men's eyes is that smoking has to be forbidden because of the straw. In the winter evenings the men usually cross the farmyard to the kitchen, where they smoke and make friends with the farmer, and buy coffee, at a penny a bowl, from his wife.

LVIII

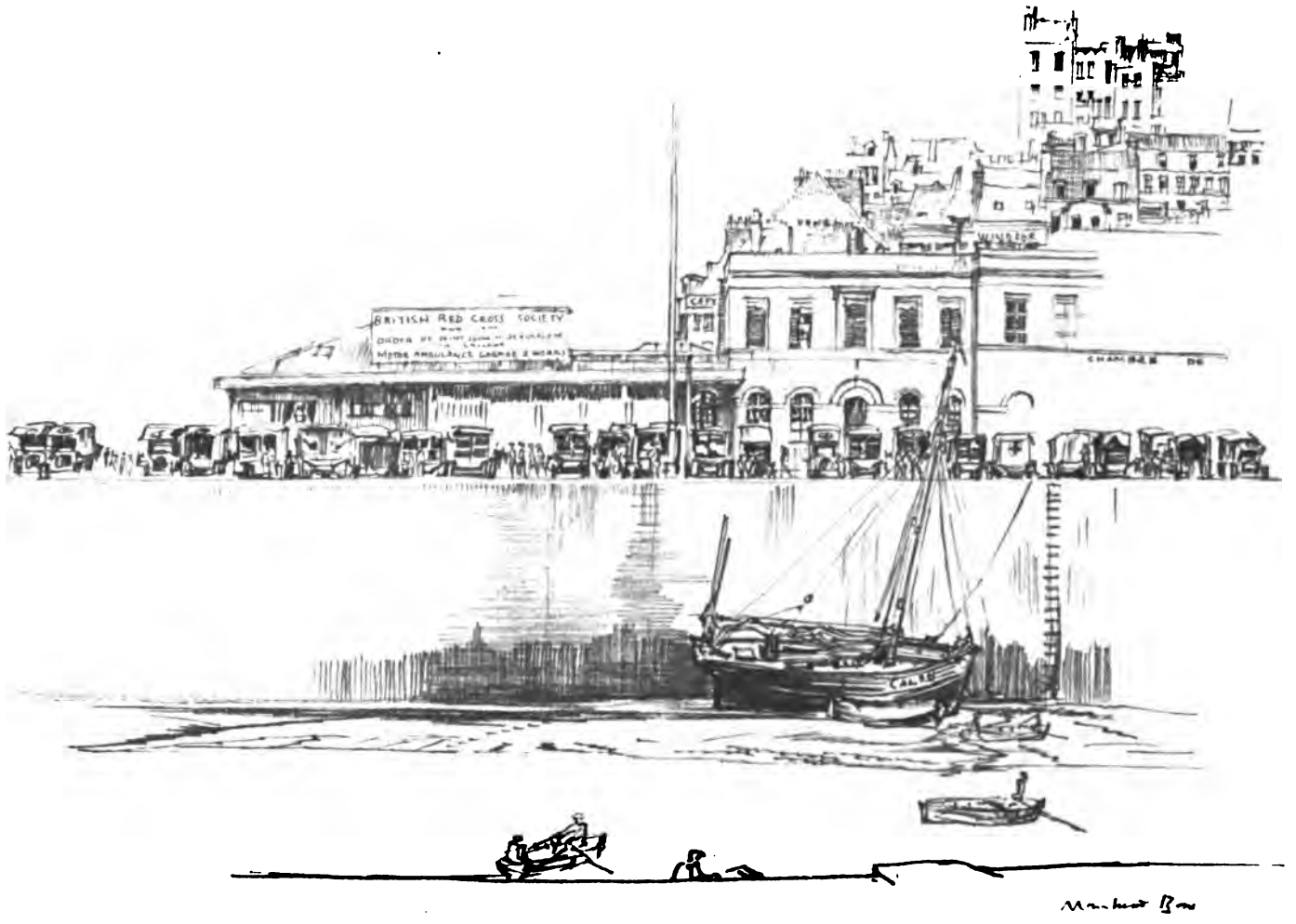
WELSH SOLDIERS

Characteristic trench attitudes, two of the men with their heads well down, the cheek cuddling the small of the butt, while the N.C.O. beyond directs their fire, with his head a little free. There is just the same soldierly combination of " much care and valour " in the typical Welshman in France to-day as there was in Shakespeare's Fluellen.

LIX

A BRITISH RED CROSS DEPOT AT BOULOGNE

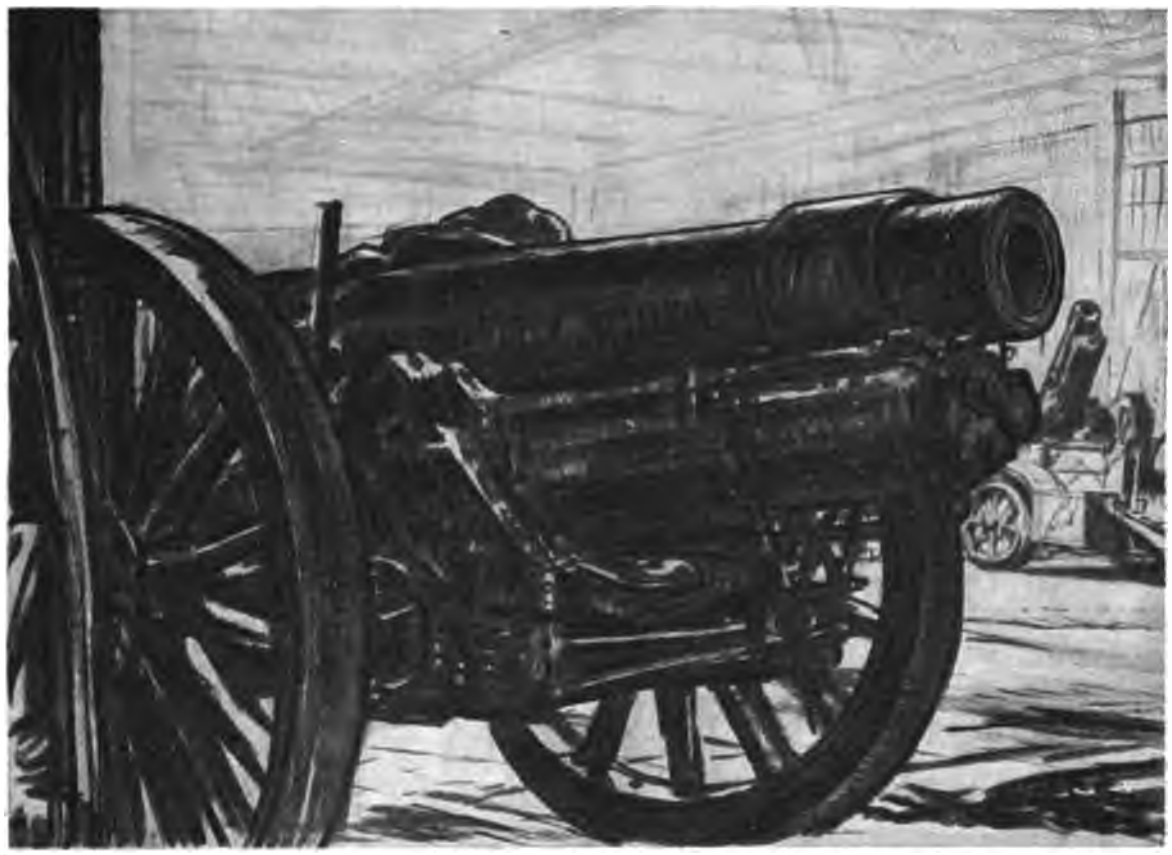
Dead low water in Boulogne Harbour, and a slack time for the motor ambulances parked on the quay above. The work of the R.A.M.C. inevitably comes in rushes, with lulls in between. The great thing is, when a rush comes, to treat every case with a rapidity exactly proportioned to its urgency, removing instantly to the base hospitals or to England every serious case which will be the better, or none the worse, for a slight delay in operation. To work this system perfectly there must always be in readiness, at every point where wounded are entrained or transhipped, a supply of ambulances equal to the maximum call.


BRITISH RED CROSS SOCIETY
CAFE

LX

INDIAN CAVALRY

Our Indian Cavalry on the Somme were given a chance of showing their quality at the Bois de Foureaux on July 17th, 1916. They used it. Apart from other soldierly qualities, the grave dignity of their bearing impresses all foreign visitors to the battlefield. They always salute a passing officer as if they were Kings and he an Emperor.



THE UPPER HAND

IN these better days it is no harm to speak of the time when the Marne had been won and yet our Army in France was within an inch of its life. The thread of its fate had frayed very thin; only one strand remained; at last, not even that—what had taken its place was a gallant sham, a last forlorn bluff, scarcely a hope. And then came the ancient reward of those who fight on without hope. Like a storm that had blown itself out, the strain was suddenly gone. The strong had not known all their strength, the weak had steadfastly hidden their weakness, and they had worn out the strong.

That extreme peril has never recurred. But there were months in 1915 when men in our trenches still felt that the upper hand was not theirs. What would happen was this. Once or twice in the day the Germans, after their meals, would spray a piece of our trench with trench-mortar bombs and rifle-grenades. As a rule they did not mean

to attack, in the fuller sense. The piece was not an overture; it was complete in itself, a sort of isolated *pas d'intimidation*. Not many men on our side would be killed. But, while the shower went on, everyone on duty in our firing trench felt with crystal clearness that he was on the defensive. At each fresh discharge he would plaster himself upon the front wall of the trench and gaze upwards for the coming evil. If he saw the approaching waddle of a trench-mortar bomb, wagging its tail through the air, he would judge it like a catch in the long field, only with an ardent desire to miss it; and to this end he would jump round corners of trench and put solid angles of earth between him and the large muted sound like "pfloonk" that was to ensue. If what he heard was the thin hiss or spit of a rifle grenade, then he knew that it could not be seen, and he kept his head down and wondered how near the venomous little metallic smash of the burst would be. In any case he was bespattered, throughout the bombardment, with little falling bits of earth, warm metals and products of combustion; the tinkling of this hail on his helmet deepened his rueful sense of resemblance to a hen crouching under the lee of a hedge in bad weather. And, all this time, our own mortars and guns would be silent or—almost worse than silence itself—would reply with the mildness of Sterne's patient ass. "Please do not shell our front trench. But, if you want to, you may," so they seemed to be saying.

From these mortifications the men in the firing trench, and the gunners who had endured the sharper torment of not being able to help them, were saved by the women, whom Mr. Bone shows us working at home, arming their knights for battle in a sense more valid than any known to Froissart or Malory. There came a time, most moving and memorable to all who were then in our trenches, when any German attempt to gall them began to evoke new, heart-warming sounds. All the upper air, over the place where the pelted sentries were crouching, seemed to have come to life on our side. At last our own trench mortars were answering, not in a few grudged monosyllables, but volubly, out of the fulness of the dump. Higher up also, there rose arch over arch, as it were, of audible, reassuring protection—first the low-pitched bridges of sound traced by the whizz of our field guns, and then the vast rainbow curve of our heavier shells making wing, high over head, with a more august, leisurely waft that sounded divinely. It was a changed and

cheered world to be living in. We had the upper hand now, and every woman turning a shell or driving a crane in England had helped us to have it.

We have it now still more securely. Since that time we have learnt the technique of attack—how to keep what we take and how to take what we want at no more than it need cost in lives. We have won, in hard fight, the best of all posts of observation—the sky, so that during the great engagements last year on the Somme there was not a German aeroplane to be seen in the air while ours were ranging everywhere over the battlefield, each with its eyes on the enemy's lines and its voice at the ear of our guns. Our men and the gunners have now crossed bayonets so often that all the old awe in which Europe held the men of Sedan and Sadowa is gone; boys from Wiltshire and Worcestershire farms, recruits of a few months before, have chased Prussian guardsmen uphill out of their trenches and then held these ruined defences against all that those picked products of intensive military culture could do to regain them.

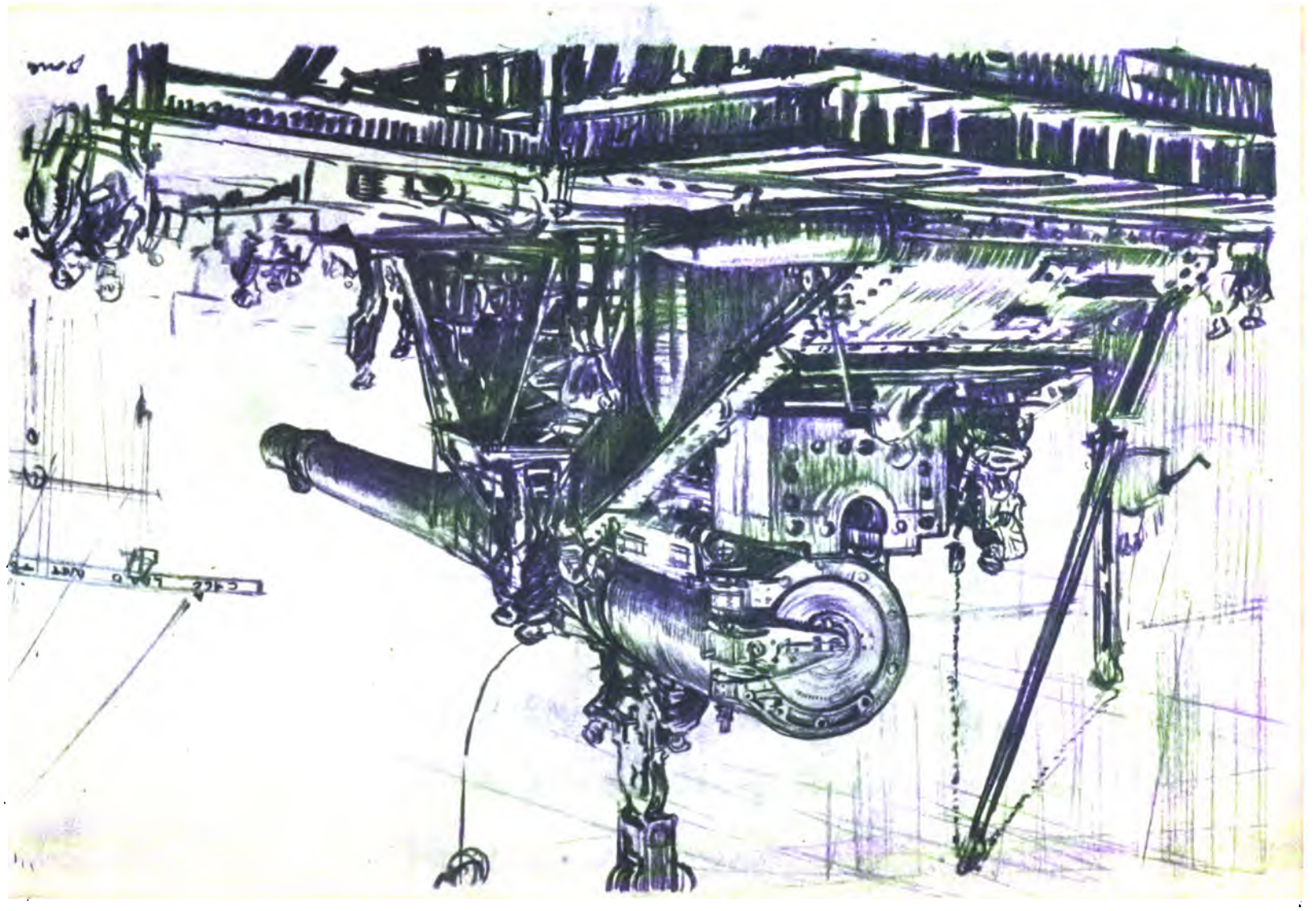
All this turning of tables has been brought about by one cause, in the sense that if that cause had been absent, the care and skill of the finest leaders, the daring of all our airmen, the staunchness of all our infantry would have been strength to no purpose. Munition workers have woven the curtain of smoke that our gunners now draw between our advancing troops and the eyes of their enemy. It is munitions that, thrown from our howitzers, make level roads through the tangles of wire on which, in the old days, the corpses of whole platoons of our men were hung up to rot and look, from far off, like washing put out to dry on thorned hedges. It is munitions that, when we attack, hold back the hostile supports behind a wall of falling bullets as hard to pass as Adam found the flaming sword at the gate. It is, then, not without reason that in this sheaf of drawings of the war on the Western front are included some drawings of guns and shells in the making. They are drawings of victory in the making, and of the saving of hundreds of thousands of British lives.

G.H.Q., FRANCE,
March, 1917

LXI

MOUNTING A GREAT GUN

One of the largest guns viewed from the breech. However many large guns may have been turned out by the same men before, a glow of pride is always felt in a gun shop when one more masterpiece like this is ready at last to go out to its work in the field.



LXII

ERECTING AEROPLANES

A great contrast to the scenes in the gun shop. Here everything is light and delicate, the bright, varnished wood curved to delicate shapes like violins, the women flitting with their needlecraft around the wide, dazzling planes and the brilliant pigmy engines shining like jewels—all seem gay and exhilarating after the sombre company of the guns. There is even a lightsome airiness about the thought that these delicate creations *fly* away from their makers' hands when completed and do not burden any railway with their transit.

LXIII

AN AEROPLANE ON THE STOCKS

Another view of the same shop. Close to, the propeller seems a great thing, wonderfully subtle in its graceful curves.

LXIV

THE GIANT SLOTTERS

These machines are among the largest of their kind. A row of them, jutting colossally forward like the heads of Egyptian sculptured lions, make an impressive feature in the spacious avenues of a great machine shop. The nearer machine is at work on part of a big gun mounting.

LXV

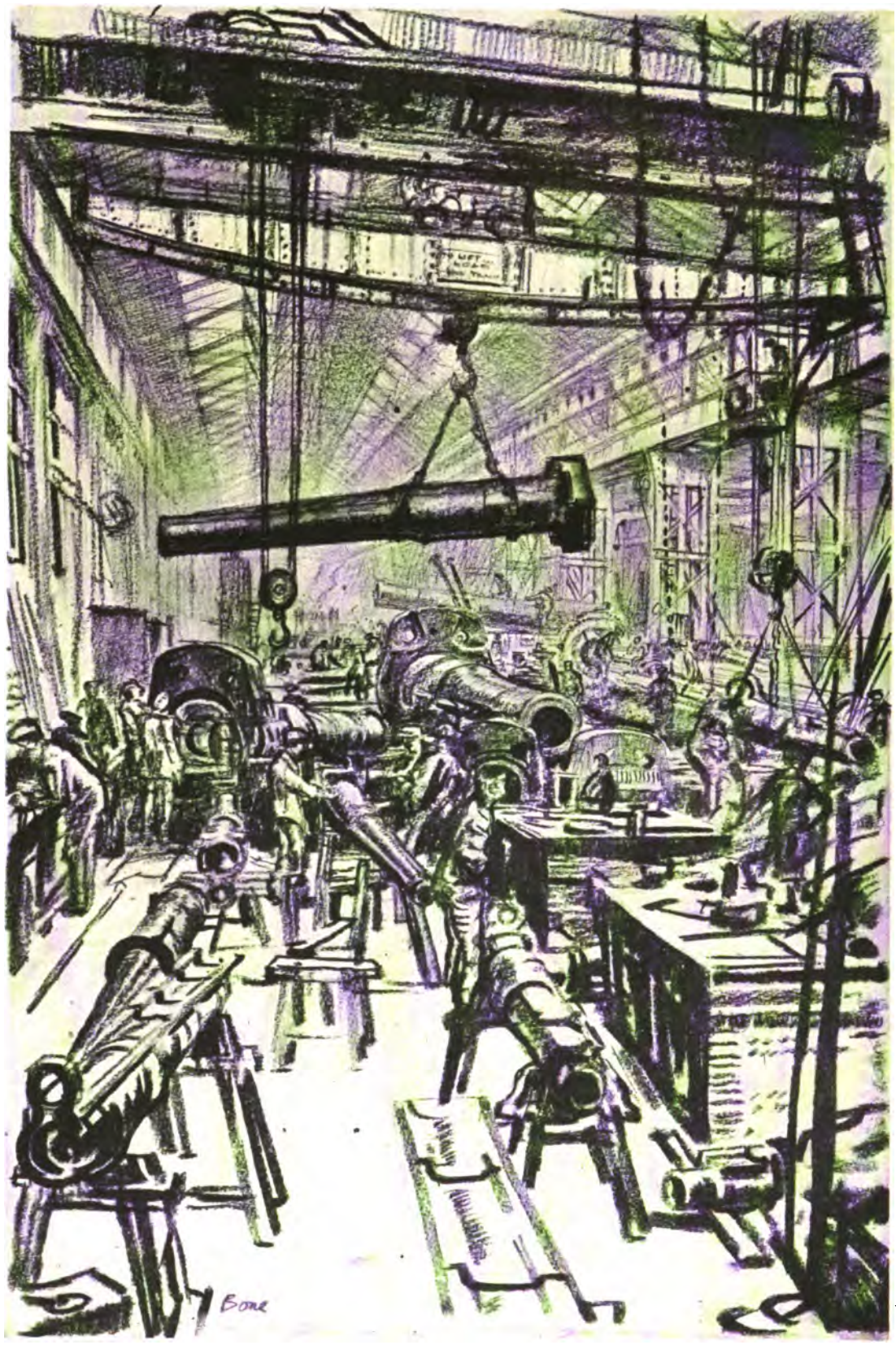
NIGHT WORK ON THE BREECH OF A GREAT GUN

The breech is open: underneath it, hidden from sight, the mechanics are at work. Such a scene has a special appeal to those who loved the stories of Jules Verne in their youth. These largest of all guns seem as if they could fulfil the hopes of Verne's sanguine President of the Gun Club and justify his fervid belief in ballistics as your only science.

LXVI

THE HOWITZER SHOP

Howitzers of various calibres are in the background; in the foreground, guns of lighter types. Guns are like ships; each piece seems endowed with a personality which endears it to its creators. The soldiers to whose keeping they are sent feel a similar tenderness towards their own special charge. They express it by giving them fond names like "Saucy Sue," "Sweet Seventeen," "Jill Johnson," "Our Lizzie," and "'Ria."



LXVII

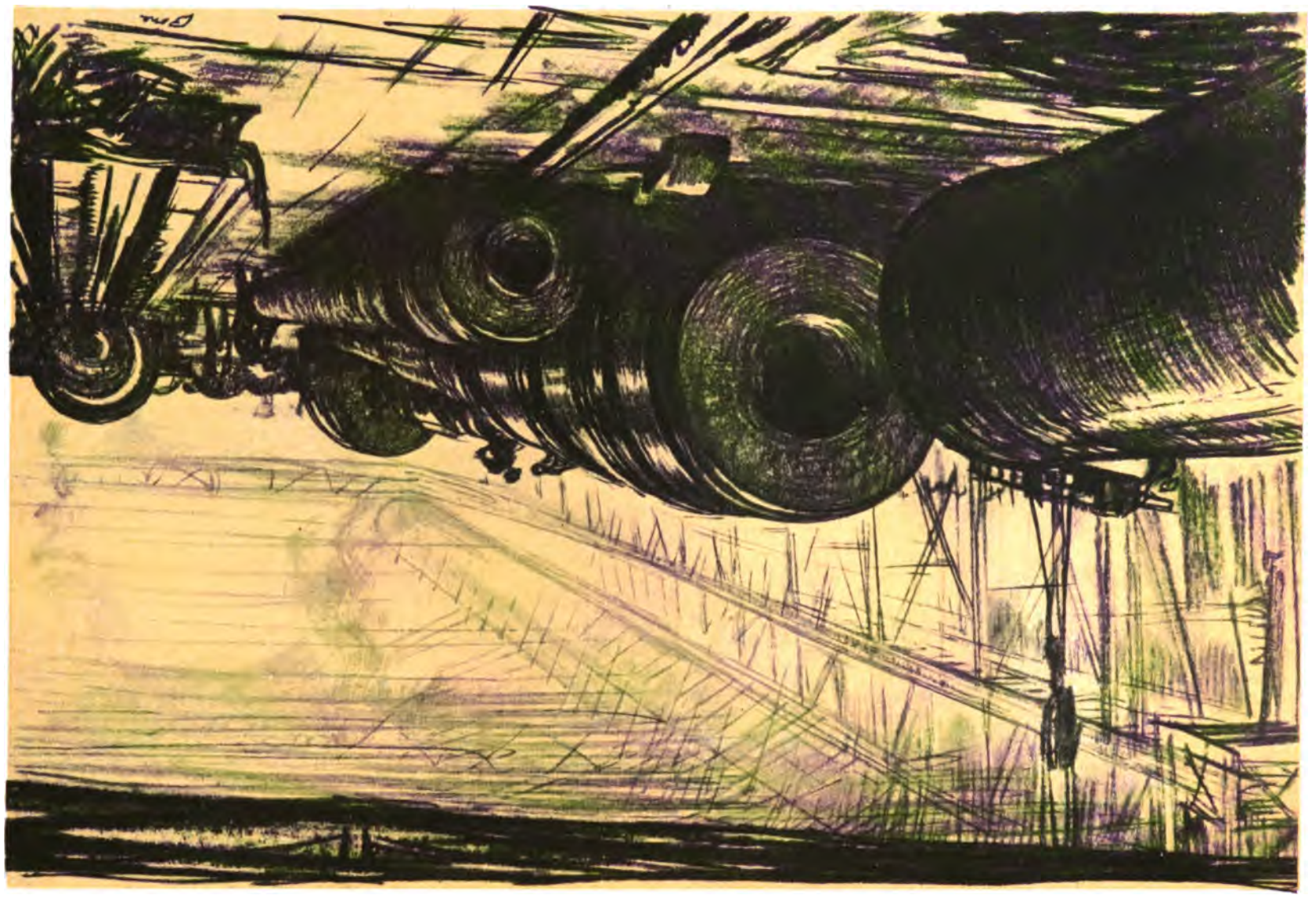
THE NIGHT SHIFT WORKING ON A BIG GUN

" A scene," the artist writes, " so romantic in its mingling of grimness and mystery that one thinks with compunction of the long line of romantic artists whose lot it was not to have seen it!" The work on hand seems carried on by noiseless ghosts, so completely is the noise of their labours drowned by the incessant hum of machines.

LXVIII

SOME GREAT GUNS

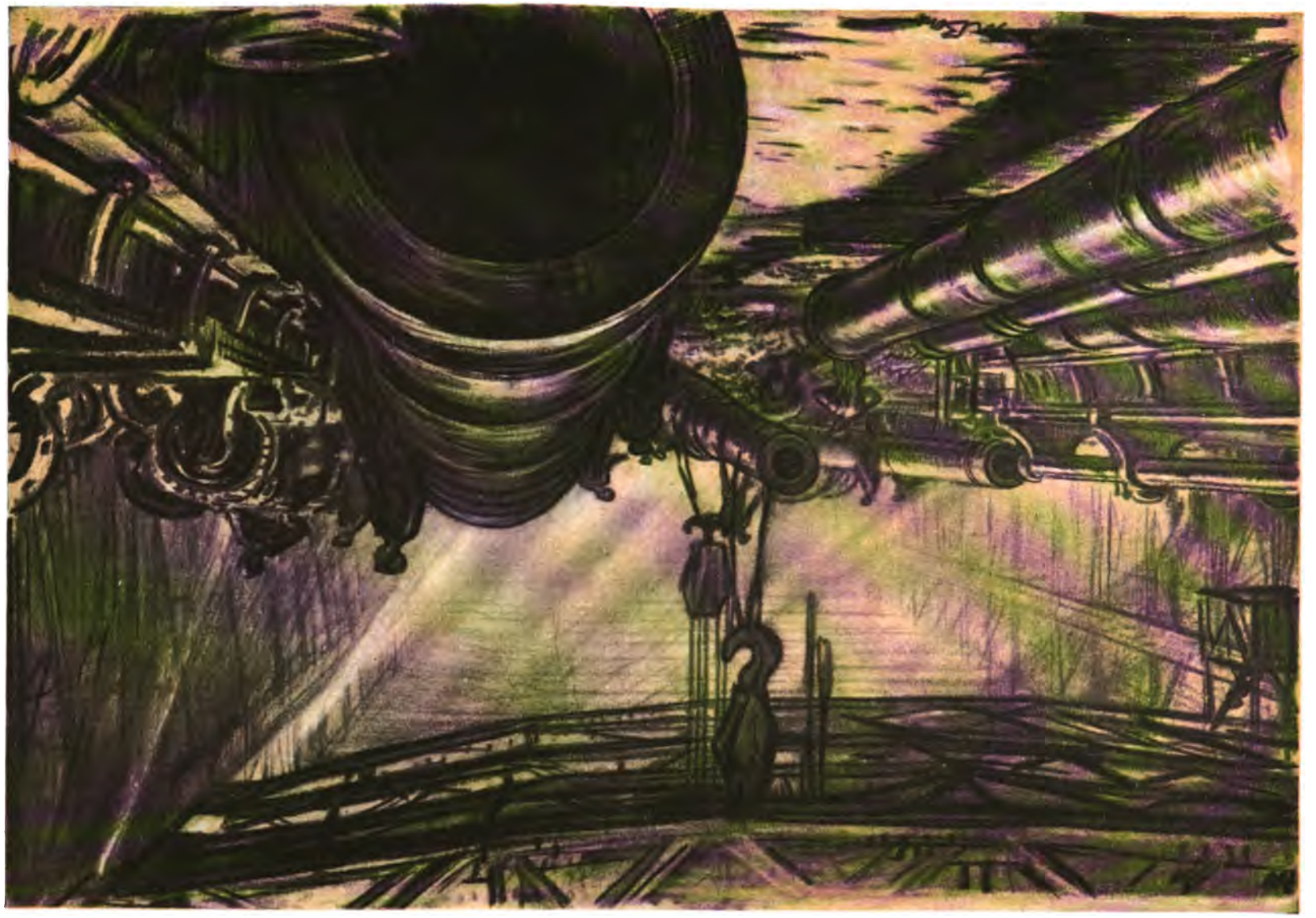
A sketch in the heavy gun bay. The size of these unmounted guns may be judged by the figures at work near them.



LXIX

MOVING HEAVY GUN TUBES

This is a corner in the gun shop where heavy gun forgings of all sorts lie about, awaiting their turn on the machines. The overhead crane is lifting one of the guns. Many of these cranes are being driven by women.



LXX

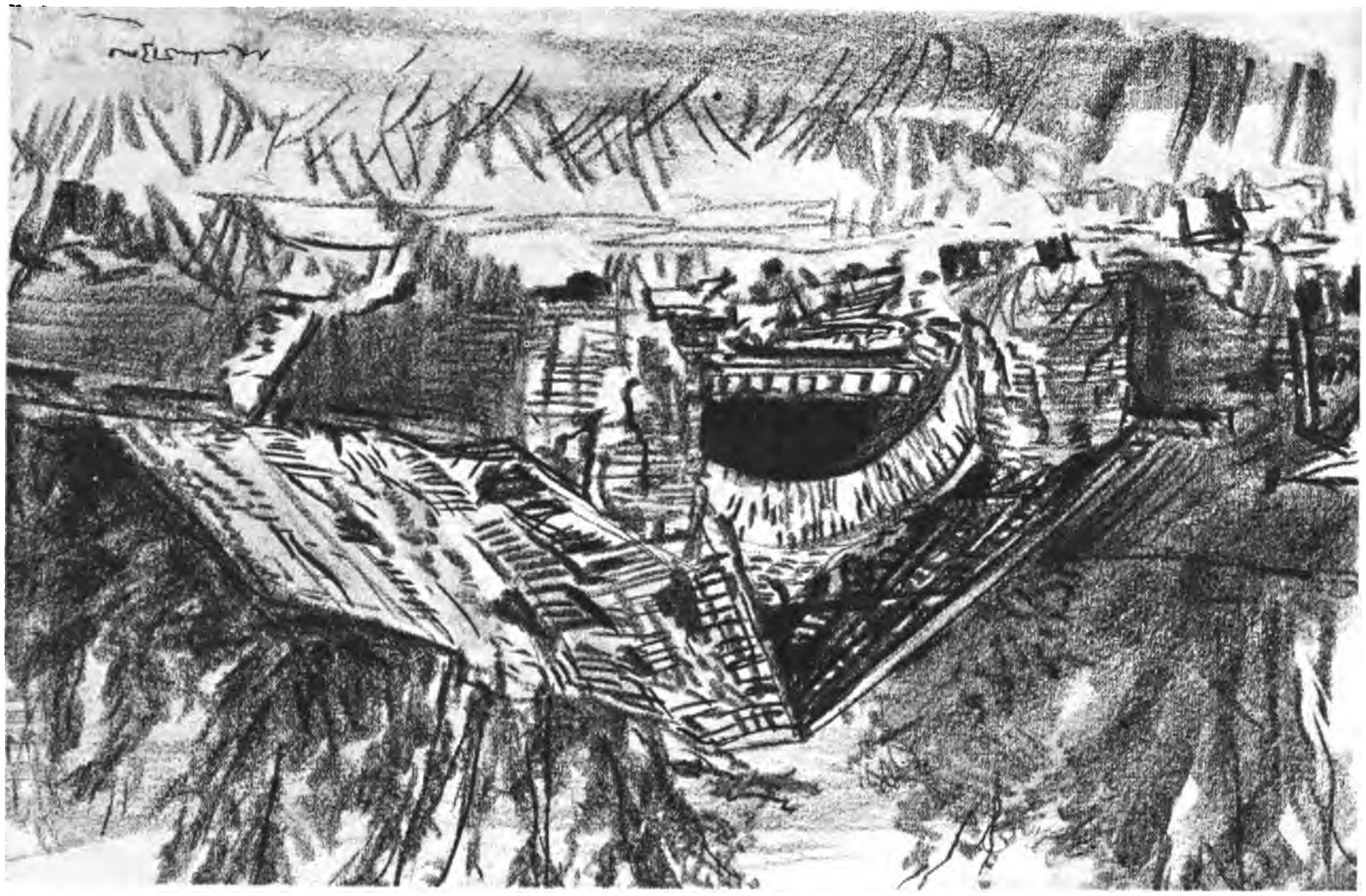
A CORING MACHINE AT WORK ON A BIG GUN TUBE

The big gun tube is rotating slowly while the tool inside scoops out long shavings of the metal like cheese parings. The mounting heaps of the metal shavings are constantly cleared away. The iridescent colours of these shavings (showing the different temperings of the steel) present surprisingly beautiful effects to the eye, tired with the bewildering rotations of the immense gun tubes on their machines.

LXXI

RUINS NEAR ARRAS

Landscape near Arras is like the biblical vine hanging over a wall—"All the archers have shot at her." Injured, but not yet destroyed, the woods seem like creatures scared, as if the trees themselves were possessed with the disquiet of dryads crouching somewhere in hiding. Many different parts of the front have their own almost personal expression, but it is seldom one of fear. At and around Arras this expression of alarm is so curiously strong that, if he transgressed prose, the visitor might fancy the taut bulrushes were nature's hair standing on end, and a slight stir in the poplars her shudder. By some means, which a layman cannot mark down, Mr. Bone has suffused his drawing with his own sense of the tragic queerness of this vacuous and unnerved landscape.



LXXII

ON THE SOMME: IN THE OLD NO MAN'S LAND

High ground near "King George's Hill," whence the King viewed the main battlefield of 1916; the drawing shows this in the distance. The foreground was won last July by the Manchesters. They found in No Man's Land the bodies of many Frenchmen killed in earlier fighting, and buried them beside their own dead. Not all the bodies could be identified: Some of the crosses shown in the drawing bear such inscriptions as "In honoured Memory of Two Unknown French Soldiers, buried here."

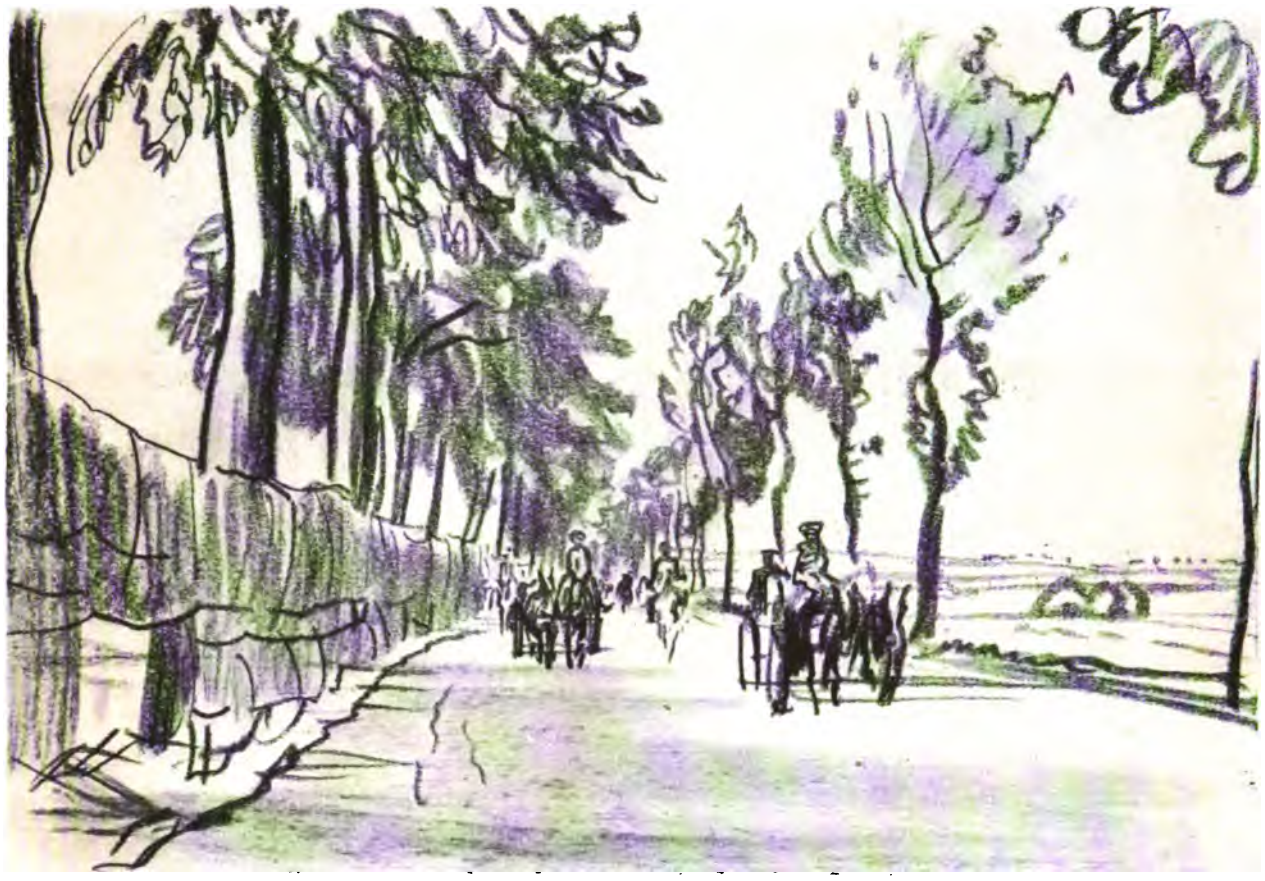
LXXIII (a and b)

A ROAD NEAR THE FRONT

The canvas screen on the left remains from a time when this stretch of road was under enemy observation. The battle of the Somme has left it far behind the front. From a point just beyond the trees indicated upon the skyline on the right every detail of a part of the fighting on July 1st, 1916, could be seen.

A TRAIN OF LORRIES

Whether on the road between a rail-head and the front, or during a halt by the way, or at rest in their own park, the lorries of a Division keep their proper distance or interval from each other, like men on parade. If one falls lame it is taken in tow; if disabled past towing, it falls out and waits for a first-aid mobile workshop to come and repair it. The scene here is one of the two chief roads to the Somme front. In July and August, 1916, the procession of lorries along it was often unbroken for several miles. Field railways have much lightened its traffic since then.



LXXIV

ON THE SOMME. R.F.C. MEN BUILDING THEIR WINTER HUT

To most English soldiers it is one of the compensations, and not of the hardships, of active service that they so often have to do work which is not their own trade nor a regular part of all soldiering. They find a flavour of the sport of peace-time camping-out in the work of making or finding their own shelter from the weather. Sometimes it is done, as here, with excellent materials, sometimes with hardly any at all, and the man who has built himself a rain-proof hut, for one, out of a few old biscuit tins, some sticks and a waste piece of corrugated iron enjoys a special thrill of triumphant ingenuity.

LXXV

MARICOURT: THE RUINS OF THE VILLAGE

Near Maricourt the British line ended, and the French began, during the battle of the Somme. Blue and khaki were equally blended in the endless lines of traffic passing both ways through Maricourt and raising a barrage of dust all along the road to Bray-sur-Somme. At Maricourt cross-roads there was a doubled post of military police, one man British and one French, ready with rebuke or instruction in either tongue. The place is now several miles behind the British front, and its old animation is gone. It and the woods near it are less completely destroyed than most of the neighbouring villages. Many walls are standing; even a few roofs remain.

LXXVI

ON THE SOMME, NEAR MAMETZ

The German front line, until July 1st, 1916, run a few yards on the spectator's side of the two dismounted figures in the foreground. In the background are the bare poles of Mametz Wood. The nearest figure can be known for an Australian, by his hat.

LXXVII

A MARKET PLACE. TRANSPORT RESTING

After work the divisional motor transport lorries return methodically to their own parks. During long journeys they rest now and then, tucked into the right of the road or standing in a market place, while the men eat their haversack rations. Mixed with the lorries here are their seniors, the covered vans of French country carriers and, still older, the long, low, French farm wagons now drawn by horses, but built, as is shown by the very low pole, for draught oxen. In the market place there wait also the cars of British staff officers visiting the town. The handsome building in the background has its red-brick façade set off with alternating square bosses of white stone, on each side of the windows, after the custom of 17th and early 18th century builders.

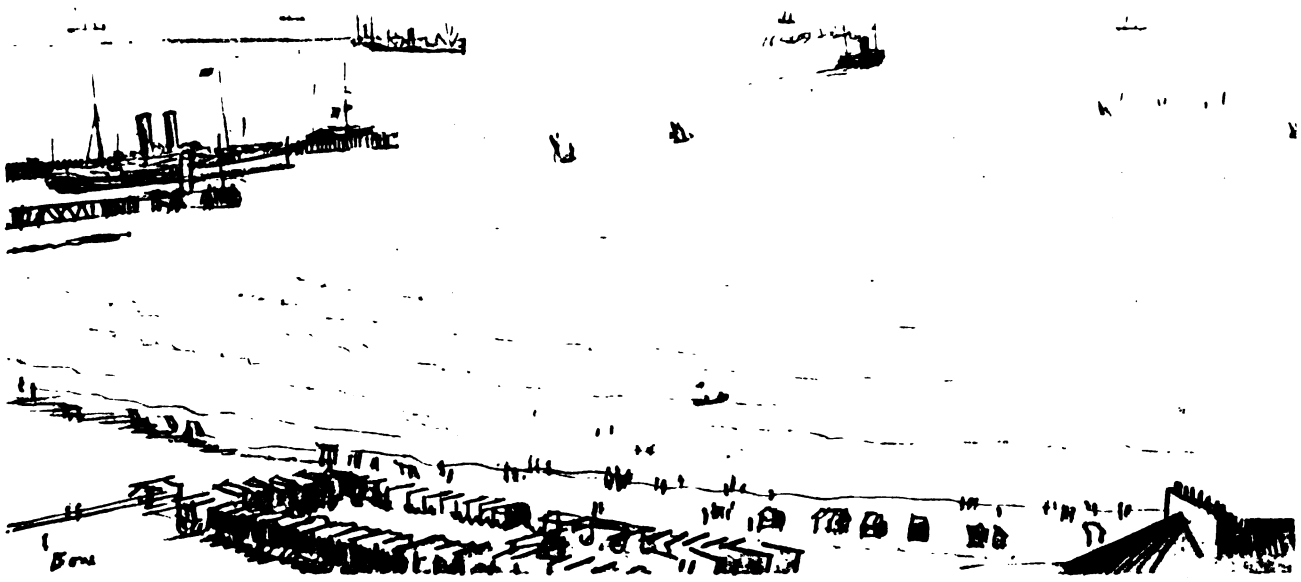
LXXVIII (a and b)

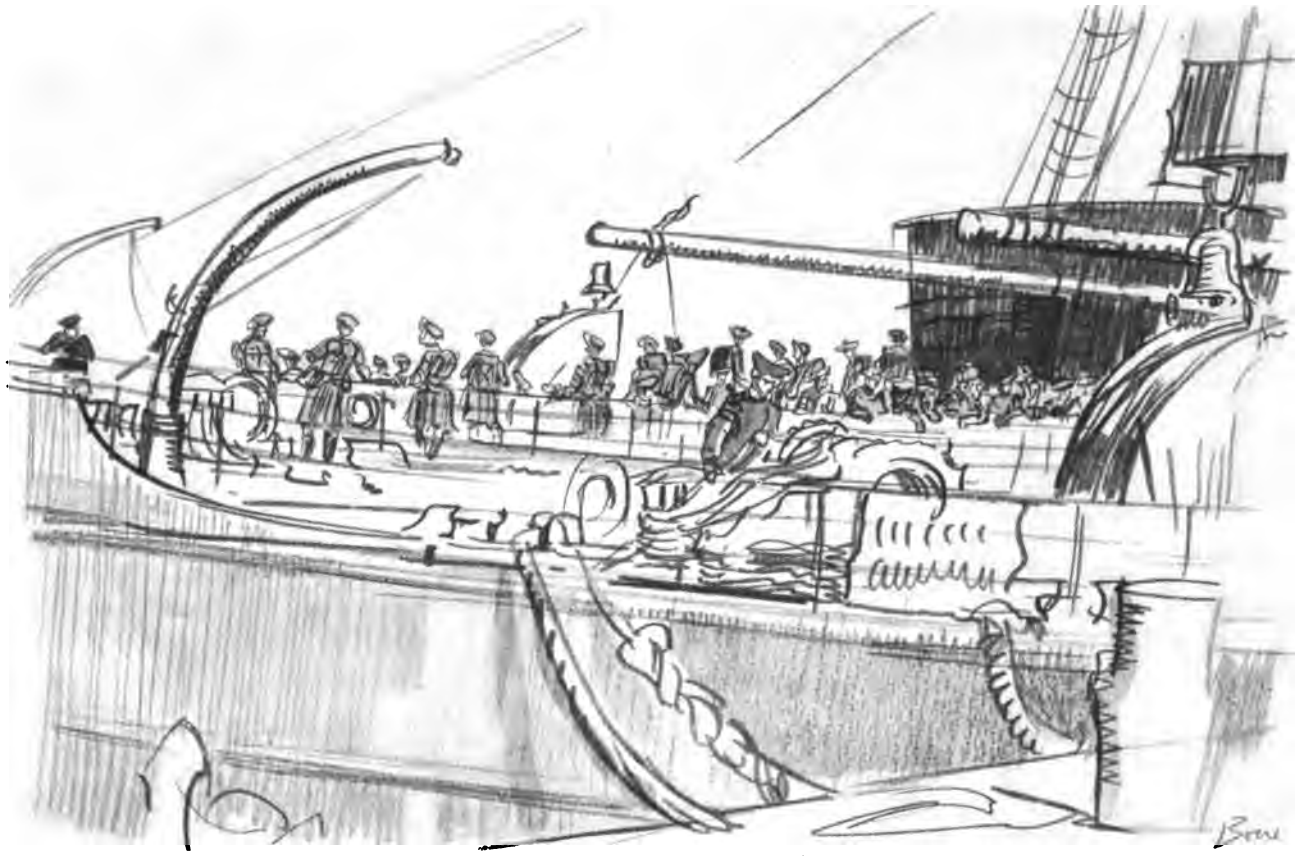
THE "BLIGHTY BOAT" AND A HOSPITAL SHIP

Leaving a French base port. The artist has contrived to suggest in his drawing of the homeward hastening leave-boat the happy eagerness with which the eyes and minds of all on board are turned westward. The slower hospital ship is just leaving the harbour. There is no possibility of any honest failure to distinguish, by day or night, the black painted lightless transport from the hospital ship with its gleaming white and light-green paint and its festal-looking tiers and crosses of scores of brilliant green and red lamps.

SCOTTISH TROOPS ON A TROOPSHIP

There are some Scottish soldiers on all troopships. On this one there were no others. The Highlanders on the drawing have the good fortune to be on deck and also not to be crowded. On most troopships the men, if on deck, look, at a little distance, like a solid brown mass.

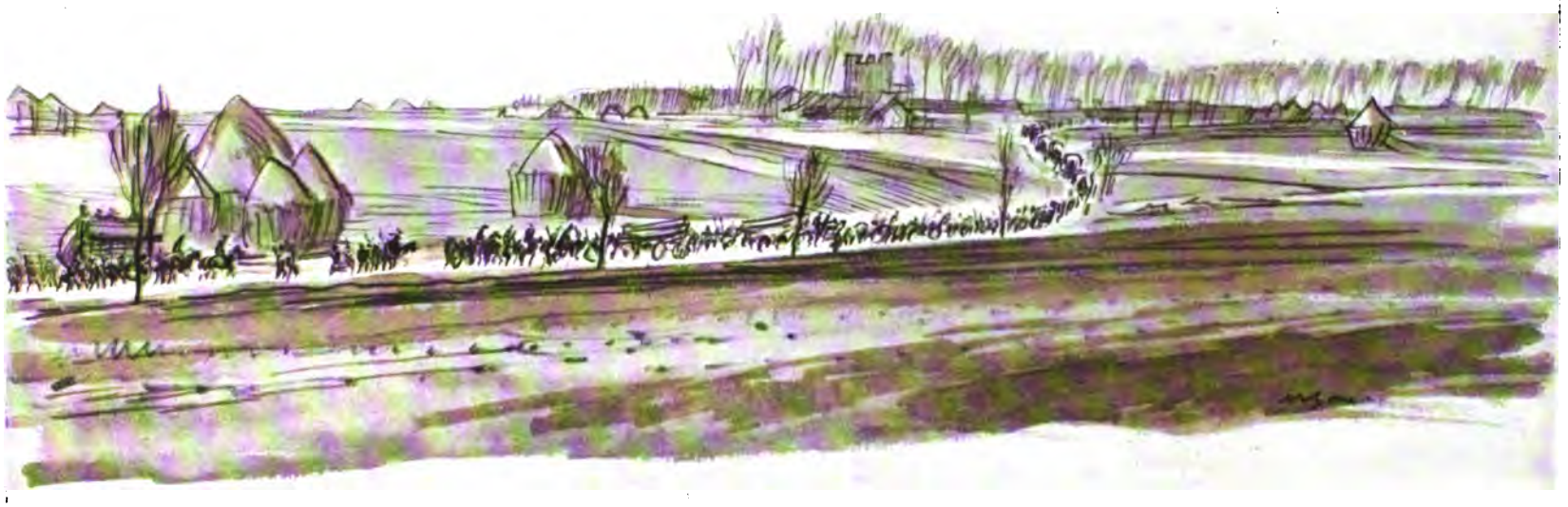




LXXIX

TROOPS RETURNING FROM THE ANCRE

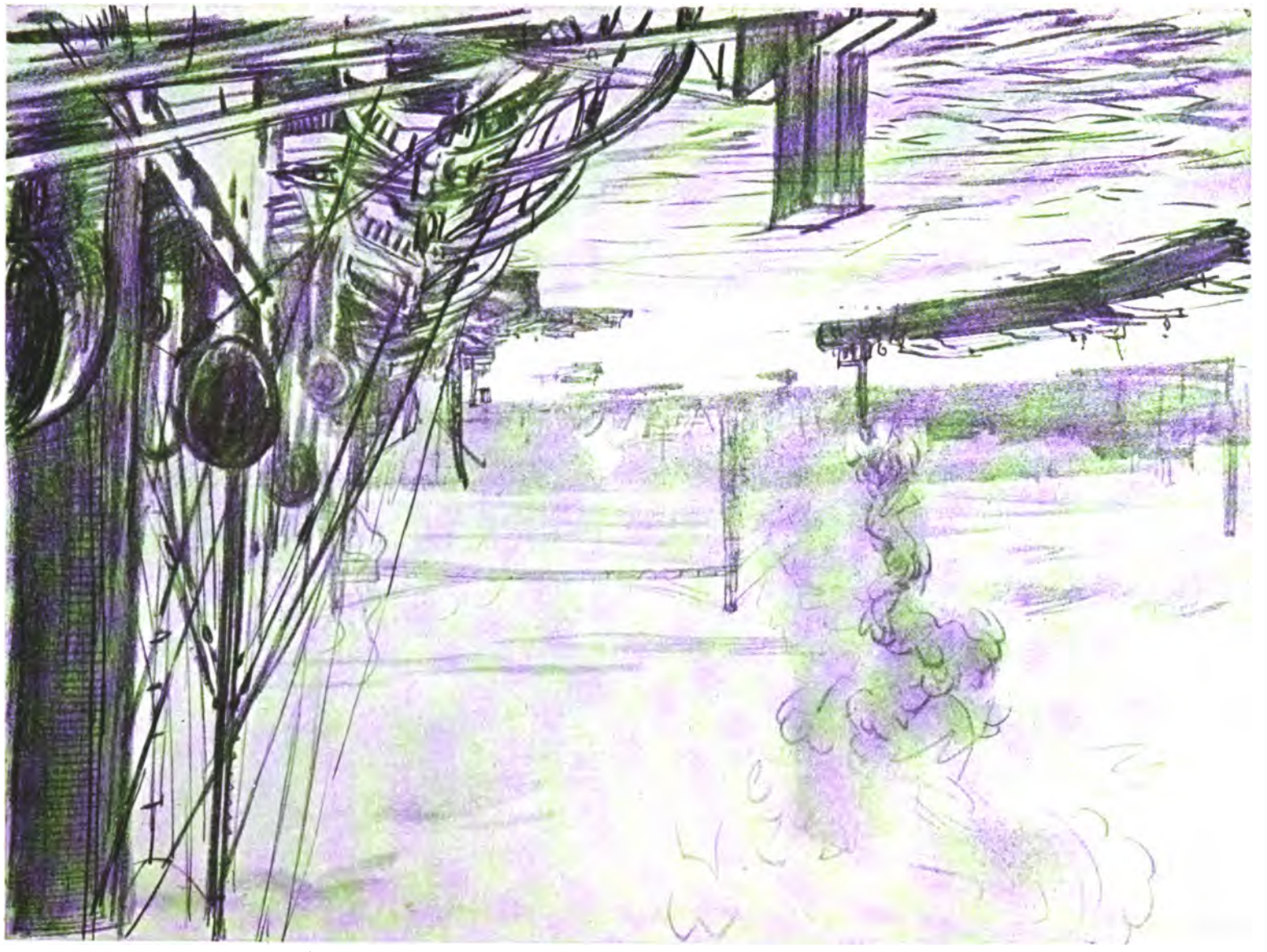
A unit coming back from the trenches to rest is unlike anything ever seen at home. Everyone is dead tired; everyone, though washed and shaved, has caked mud on his uniform; most of the men are stooping to get well under the weight of their packs and so ease the cut of the straps on their shoulders; cooks and a few footsore men trail behind the transport wagons and field kitchens, taking a tow with one hand. Odds and ends of light baggage are carried in little, almost toy-like hand-carts, the men pulling them by many ropes and pushing them from behind. Some men, perhaps, are wearing German helmets. Every-one's face has a look of contented collapse, the restful reaction of senses and nerves relaxed after many days of strained attention and short sleep. The weary and happy procession serpentines slowly across the chalk downs, carried along by the rhythm of the swing it has learnt from months of route marching in England.

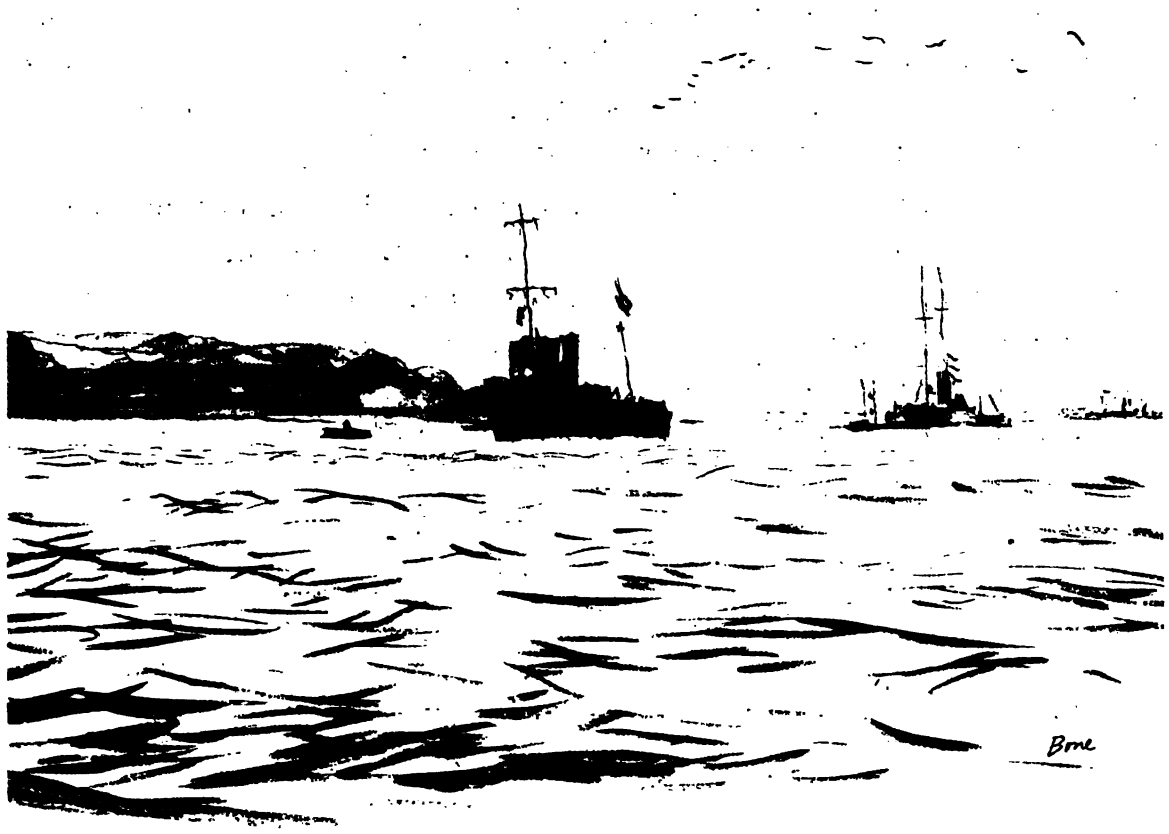


LXXX

A HOSPITAL SHIP AT A BASE

The ship's large wooden Red Cross, to be illuminated at night with electric lights, is seen near the centre of the drawing.





THE BRITISH NAVY AND THE WESTERN FRONT

OUR Western front is a line that does not really end at the sea. If it did, then its left flank might be turned. But its real left flank is not there. It is somewhere far out on a line that runs north-west of Nieuport, through and beyond the North Sea. The British soldier in Belgium or France may not see much of the Navy itself. But every day brings him some proof that the Navy is holding its part of the line. His letters never go wrong, and he knows that, but for the Fleet, they would have to make their way to him like swimmers across a bay full of sharks. It is faith in the Navy that makes the men going on leave laugh when obeying the order to put on life-belts on leaving harbour. In the soldier's mind that long left flank of

our line is not forgotten but rather written off, once for all, as unbreakable. He puts much the same sort of trust in the power of the Fleet as he puts in the affection of friends at home. To him it is one of the things that need never be feared for; it cannot fail.

This is not to say that soldiers underrate the hardness of the Navy's task. A few sailors visit the front from time to time and hold curious arguments with the soldiers, each side being deeply convinced that the other has the harder time of it. The soldier's imagination is struck by the large proportion of deaths among the casualties of naval war and by visions of night duty on vessels at sea in bad winter weather. What strikes the sailor, in presence of the imperfections of dug-outs, is the soldier's hardship of not being able to "go below" into some small cubic space of warmth and dryness when action is over or a watch is through. When a naval officer, who visited the Somme front last summer, and saw a fight near Martinpuich, rejoined the ship that he commanded, he paraded his whole ship's company and spent two hours in telling them what a rough time the soldiers had, and what fine work they were doing. The generosity of the praise made his soldier guide feel almost ashamed, remembering the almost instant fate of the "Cressy," "Aboukir," and "Hogue," and the obedience of the "Theseus" to the heart-breaking order to abandon her sinking consort.

Few officers or men from the western front can visit the Fleet; but the winds of chance, which blow casualties and convalescents all about Great Britain, drop a few of them down in spots where the Fleet, as Mr. Bone draws it, is under their eyes. Drawings like those of "A Fleet Seascape" (LXXXIX) and "A Line of Destroyers" (LXXXVI) awake recollections of guard duty in a small Scotch fishing village; of the majestic seaward procession through the midsummer night, before the battle of Jutland; of the return from the fight the destroyers streaming tranquilly back to their moorings under the hill, with the great searchlight wheeling to and fro along the sea outside them, like a sentry moving alertly on his post; a few wounded ships steaming in more sedately, or taking a tow, one with a couple of funnels knocked out of the straight, another with a field-dressing of bedding stuffed into a hole in her side, and the whole wound, apparently, smeared with red paint, as the surgeons smear flesh wounds with yellow; and then of the coming

ashore, the men triumphant and happy, the officers learning with astonishment and indignation that people at home had heard more of losses than of the victory.

Mr. Bone's drawings give an insight into the world of the Navy to which these random glimpses can add nothing. "H.M.S. 'Lion' in dry dock" (LXXXIII) is wonderful, technically—if a layman may judge—and in spirit. A whole aspect of modern naval life is lit up by "A boiler-room on a battleship" (XCIII). For, to the astonished landsman visiting a man-of-war, the sailors of to-day seem to work and eat and sleep in a variety of engineering laboratories, surrounded by countless wheels, handles, buttons and bells for the evocation or dismissal of the genies of steam, petrol and electricity. Nothing could be more unlike the lower decks of seventeenth and eighteenth century battleships as we imagine them. The only things which have not changed, from the days of Drake to those of Hawke, and from Nelson's time to Beatty's, are the hereditary instinct for the sea and the fine fighting temperament of officers and men.

G. H. Q., FRANCE,
April, 1917

LXXXI

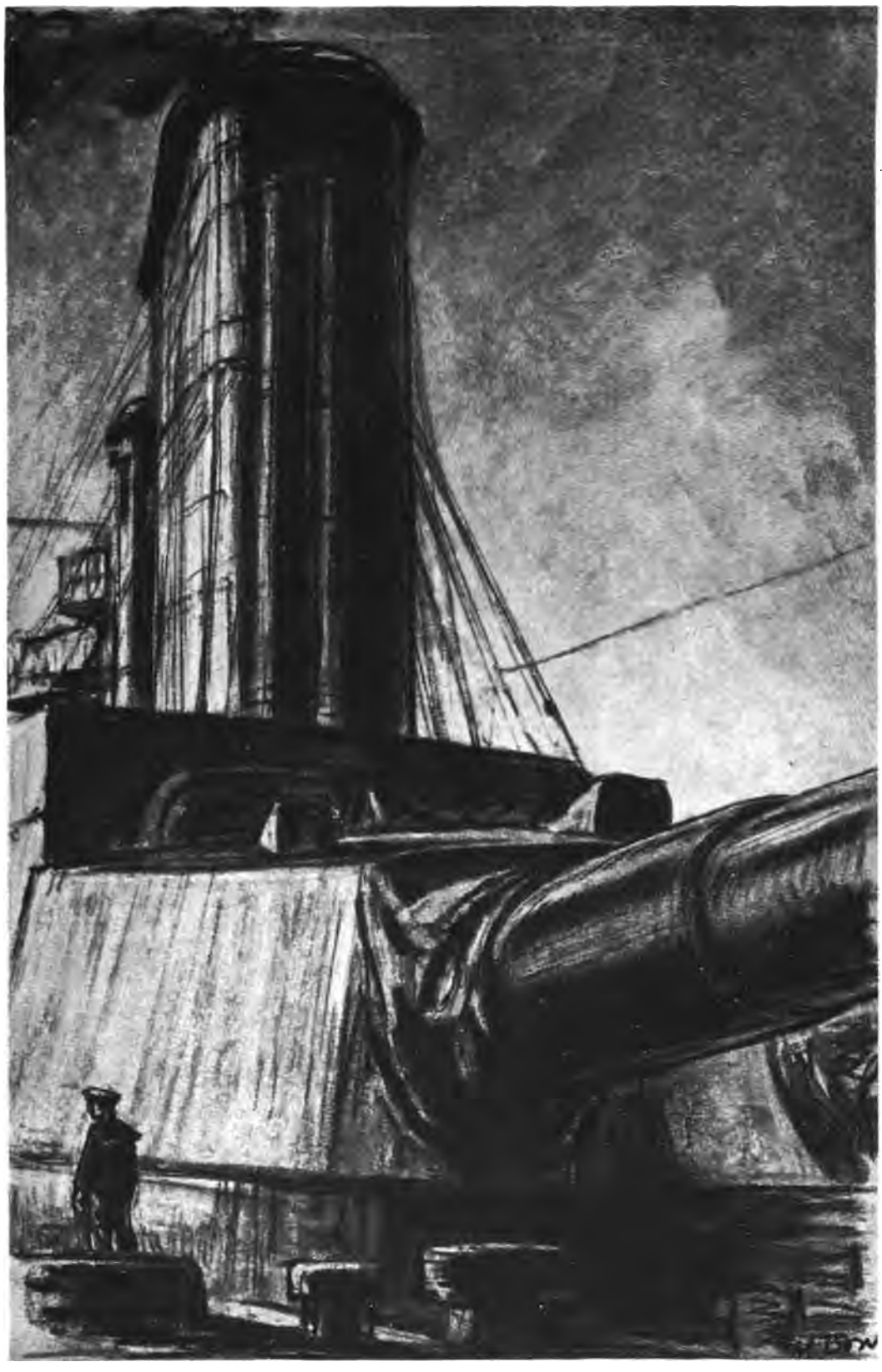
"OILING": A BATTLESHIP TAKING IN OIL FUEL AT SEA

Viewed from the bridge. A large oil "tanker" is alongside. Unseen, but very fast, the oil fuel is running into the battleship. How great a boon this new fuel is can be understood, at any rate partly, by those who have endured the coaling of a great ship in the old way. The scene shown in the drawing was animated by the changeful gleam of the gay signal flags flapping in the foreground and by the flashing of the wings of innumerable hungry gulls.

LXXXII

ON A BATTLE-CRUISER (H.M.S. "LION")

The ship's funnel behind and the sailor's figure on the left help to give the scale of the great gun.



LXXXIII

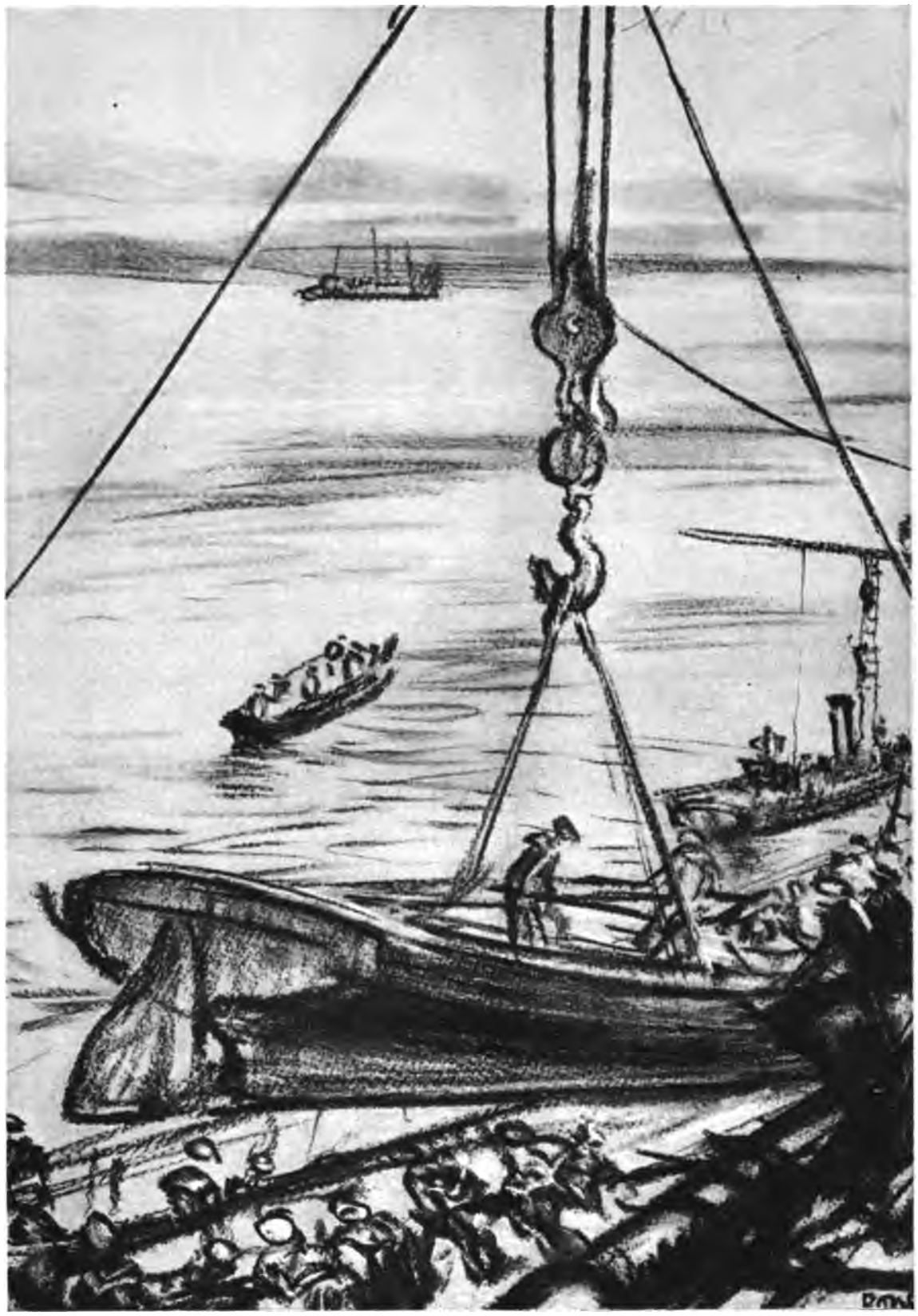
H.M.S. "LION" IN DRY DOCK

The great hull we see here has seen more battling in the present war than any other of our "capital" ships. Officially "sunk" by the Germans, she will yet prove a troublesome ghost to them. In the foreground the dock-yard workers are busily surveying the ship's Gargantuan cables for weakened or damaged links.

LXXXIV

ON A BATTLESHIP: LOWERING A BOAT FROM THE MAIN DERRICK

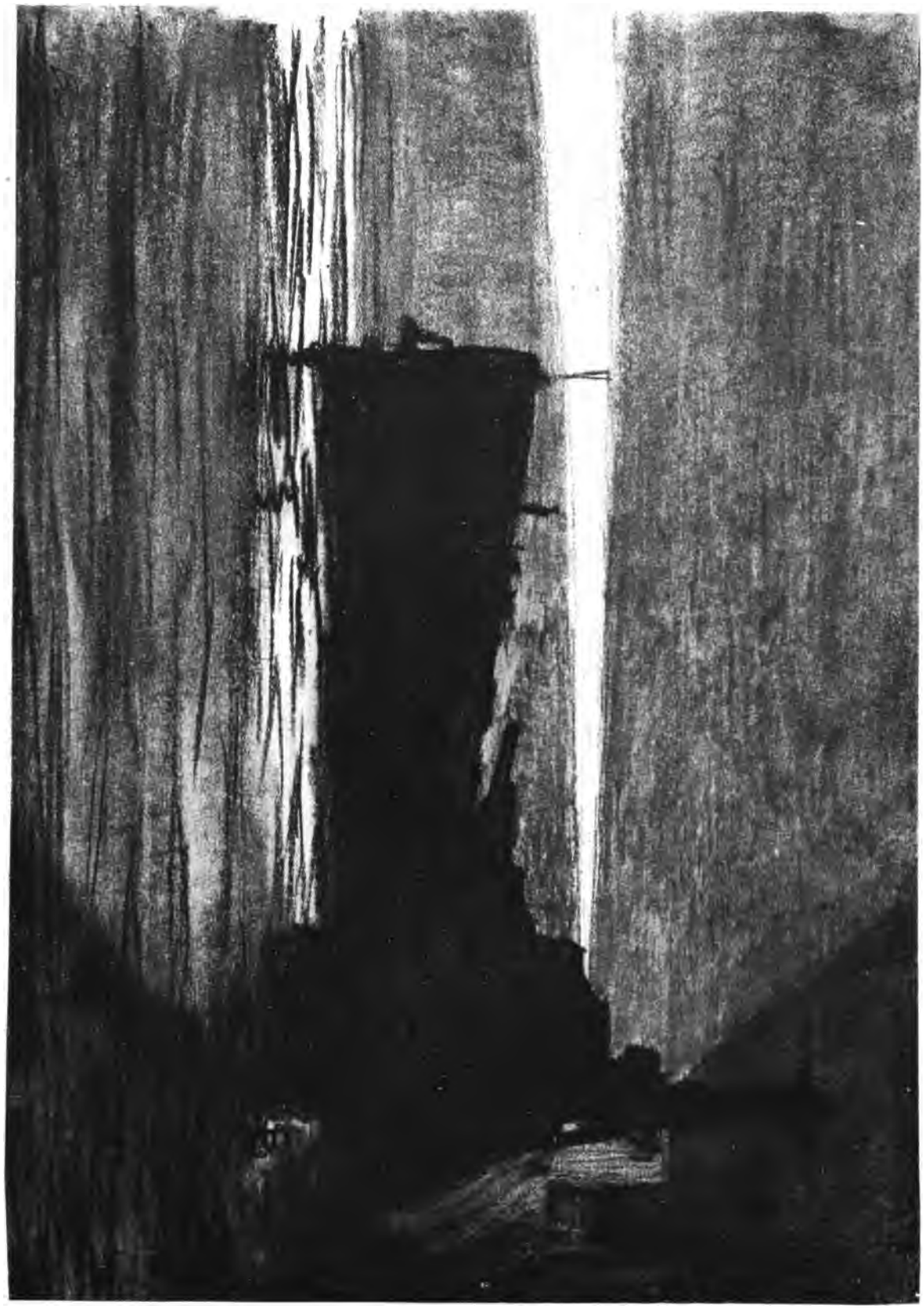
The "Main Derrick" is a great crane and lifts a heavy boat like the one in the drawing, or an Admiral's barge, out of the water and stows it on deck with the greatest ease.



LXXXV

APPROACHING A BATTLESHIP AT NIGHT

A battleship revealed by the beam of its own searchlight. A big gun emerges in silhouette, as well as a sentry on duty. One feels considerable awe when threading one's way in a small picket boat between the ships of the Fleet at night.



LXXXVI

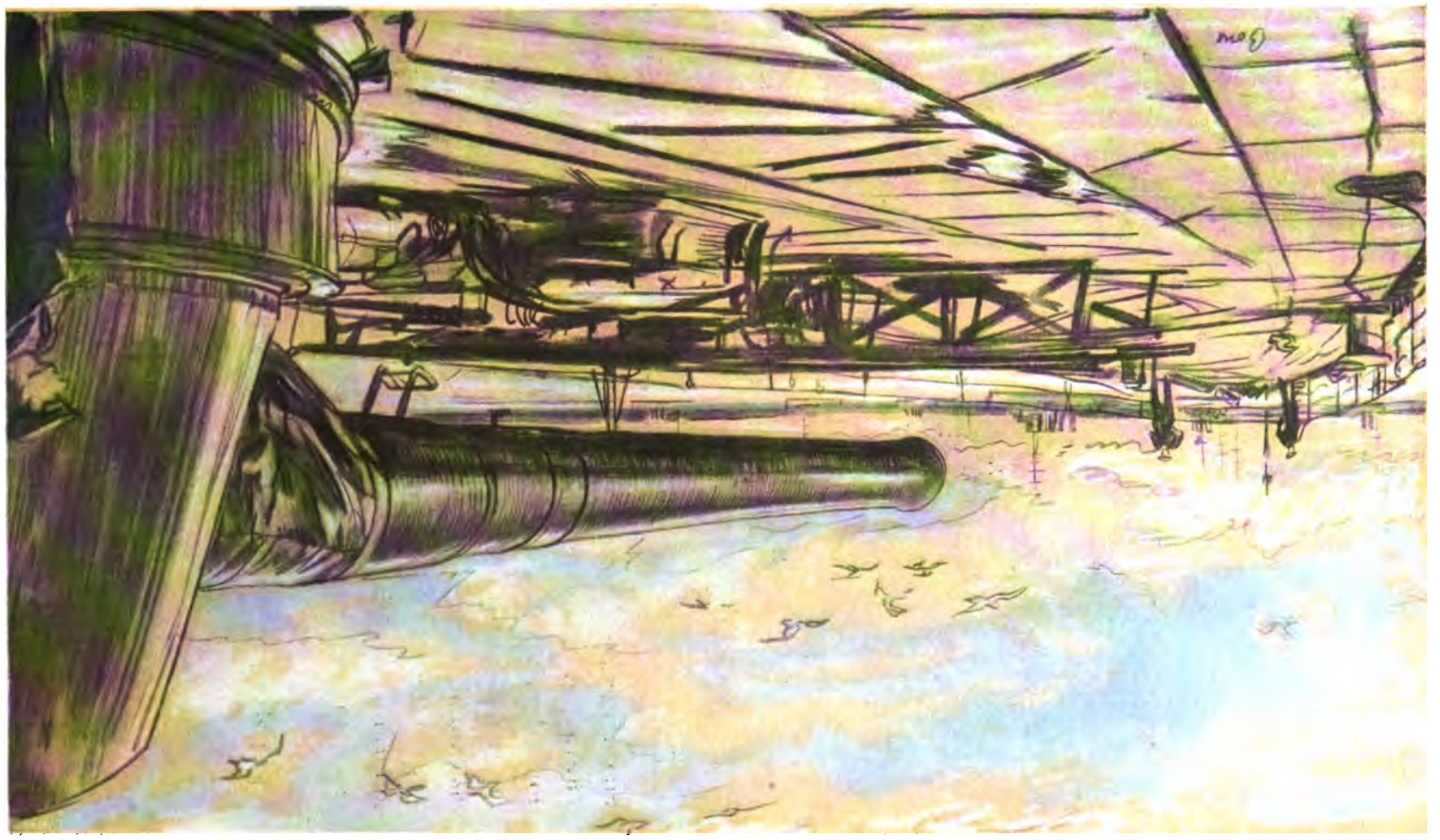
A LINE OF DESTROYERS

A line of destroyers at anchor. Seen from a distance, in this formation, a long line of destroyers looks curiously like a battalion drawn up in line of platoons in file, at a wide interval, and standing on the sea. It will be remembered that the battle of Jutland was as much a battle of destroyers as of any other type of warship.

LXXXVII

ON A BATTLESHIP: A GUN TURRET

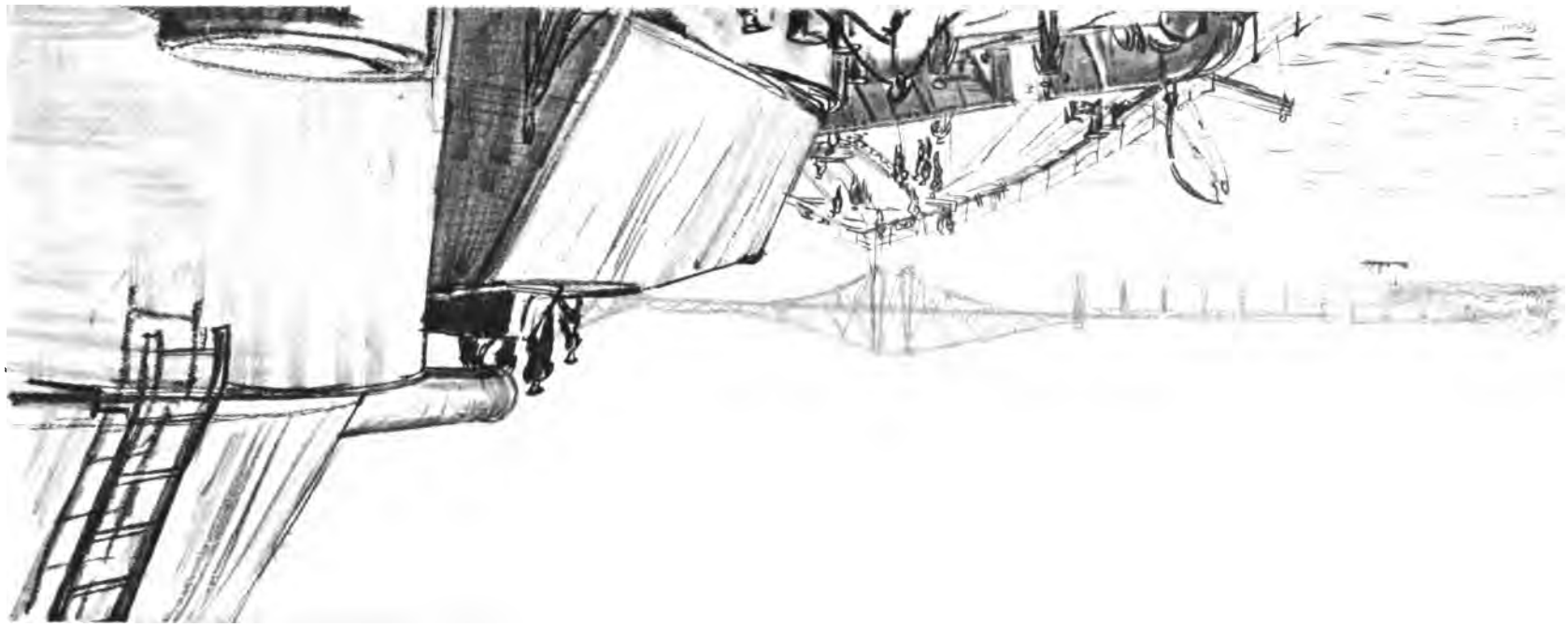
Part of the deck of one of the most famous of British ships, cleared for action.



LXXXVIII

ON A BATTLESHIP IN THE FORTH

Britain has many beautiful estuaries, but the Forth has features like the distant Highland hills and its enormous Bridge which make it unique among our waterways. The Bridge makes even the largest warship seem a pigmy, yet one has a queer sensation when about to pass under it for the first time; one momentarily expects all the ship's top hamper to be carried away—everything about the Bridge being on so big a scale that what is safely distant seems perilously close.



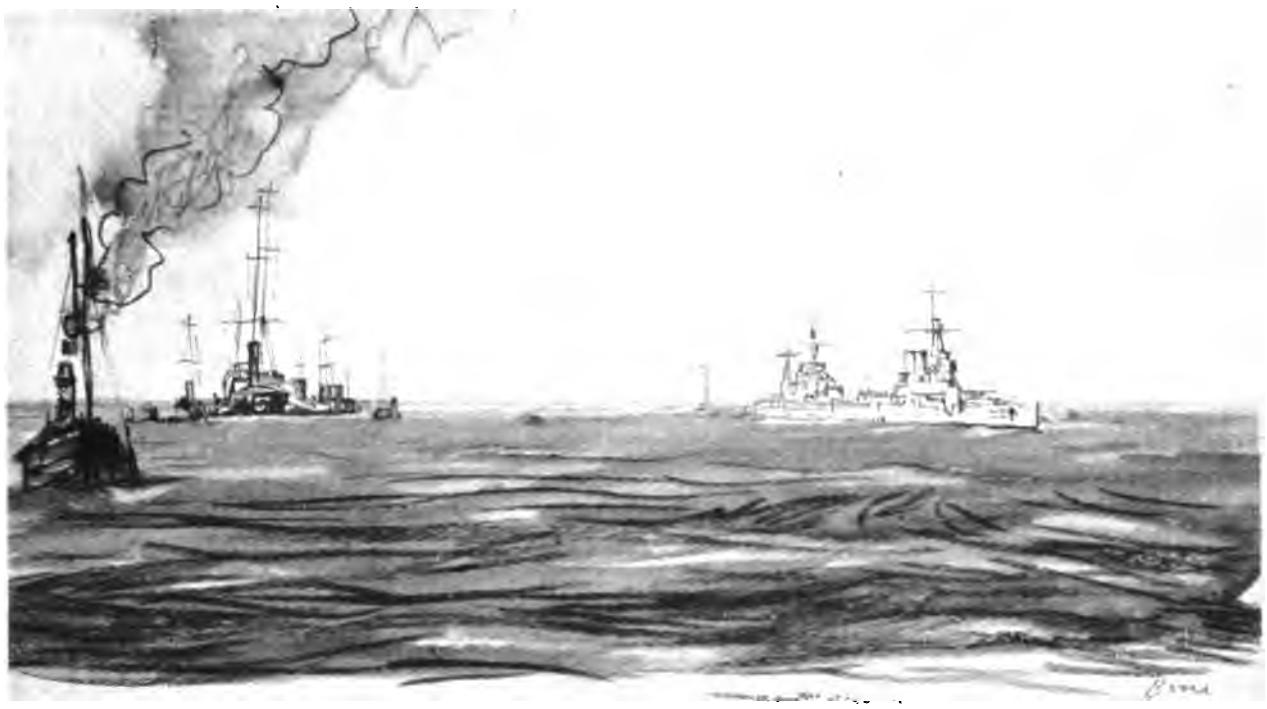
LXXXIX (a and b)

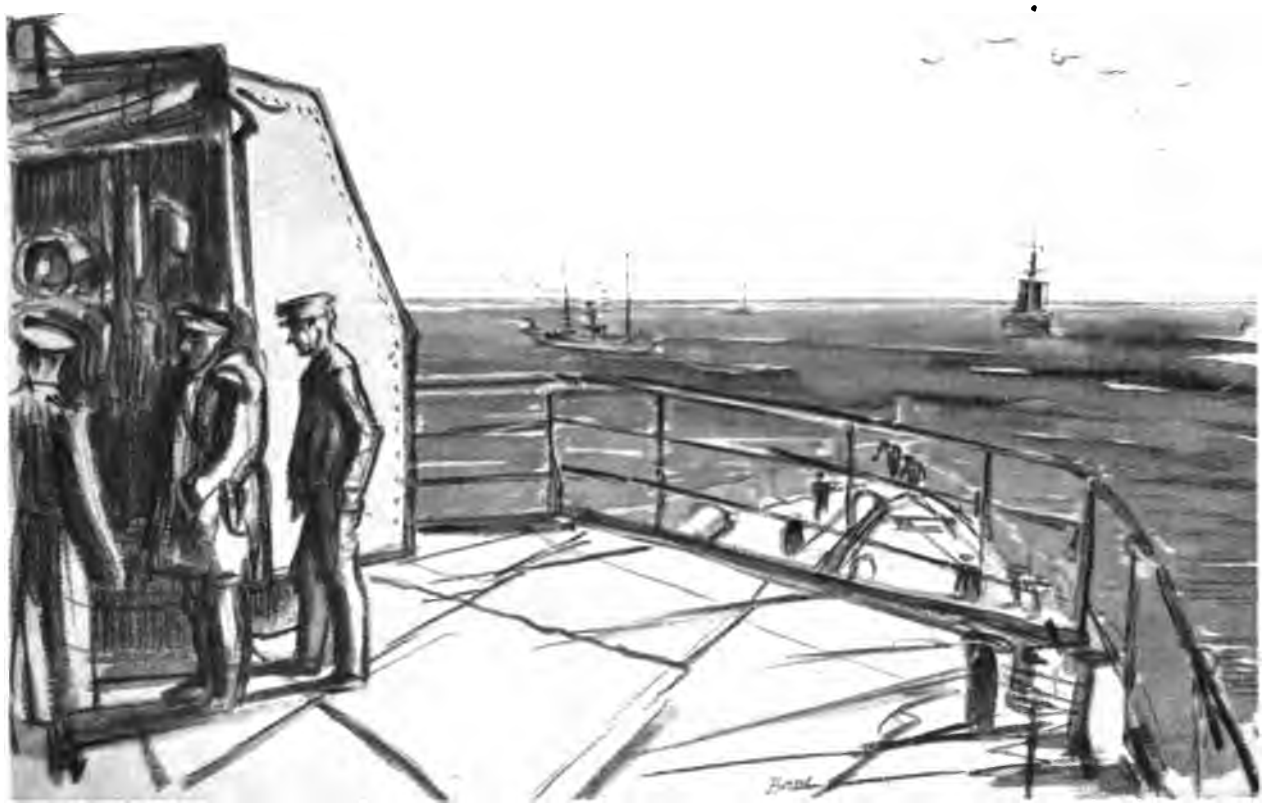
A FLEET SEASCAPE

To the left a group of destroyers are gathered round a parent ship. To the right is the beginning of an imposing line of battleships.

THE CREW AT A SMALL GUN ON A BATTLESHIP

From this point of view the shield partly hides the muzzle of the gun. The gun crew are listening to instructions. Note the "Navy Warm" worn by the figure in the middle: often, when the weather is "fine" from the landsman's point of view, it is still bitterly cold on the North Sea. Two larger guns can be seen protruding from their turret in the deck below.

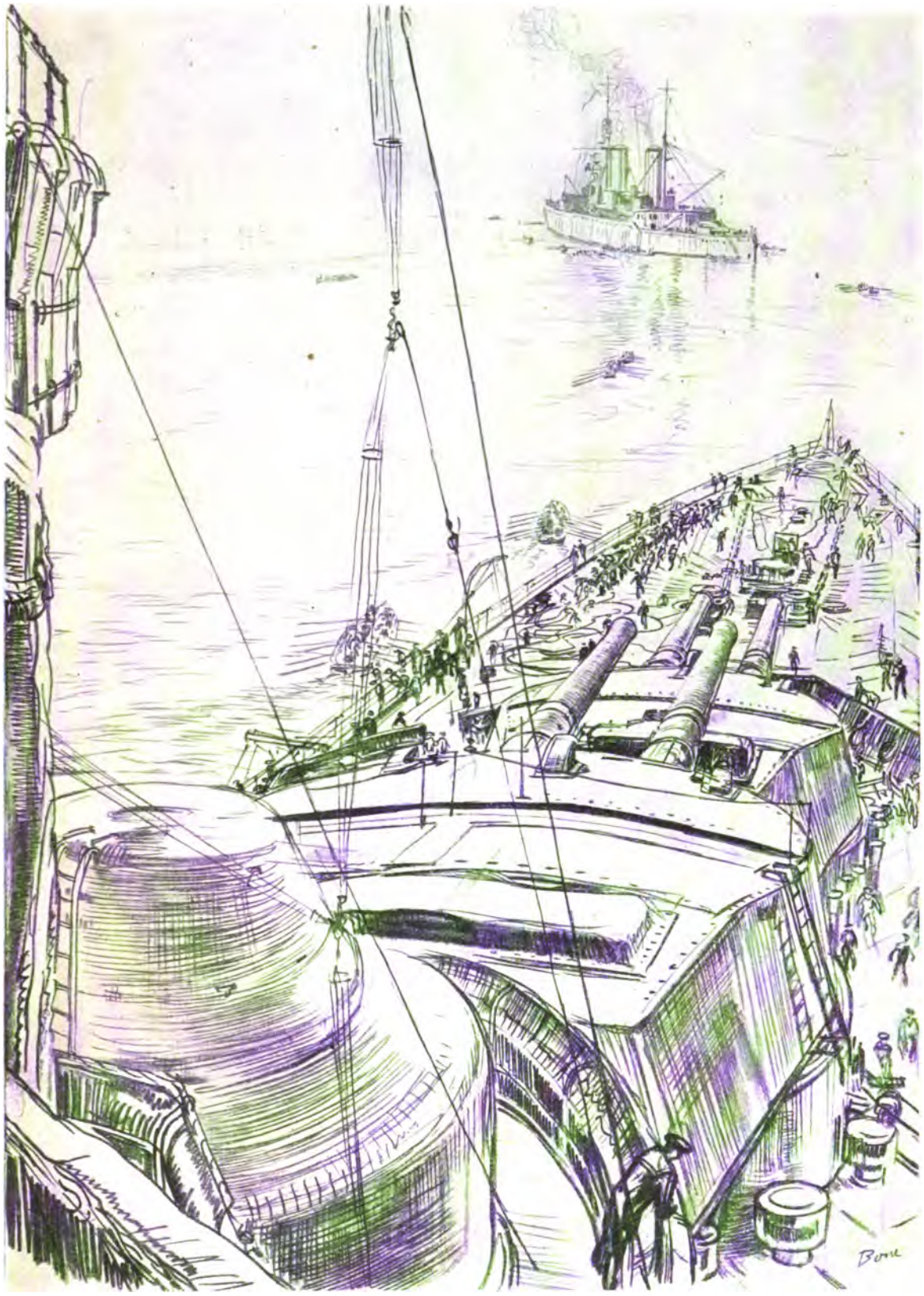




XC

THE FO'C'SLE OF A BATTLESHIP

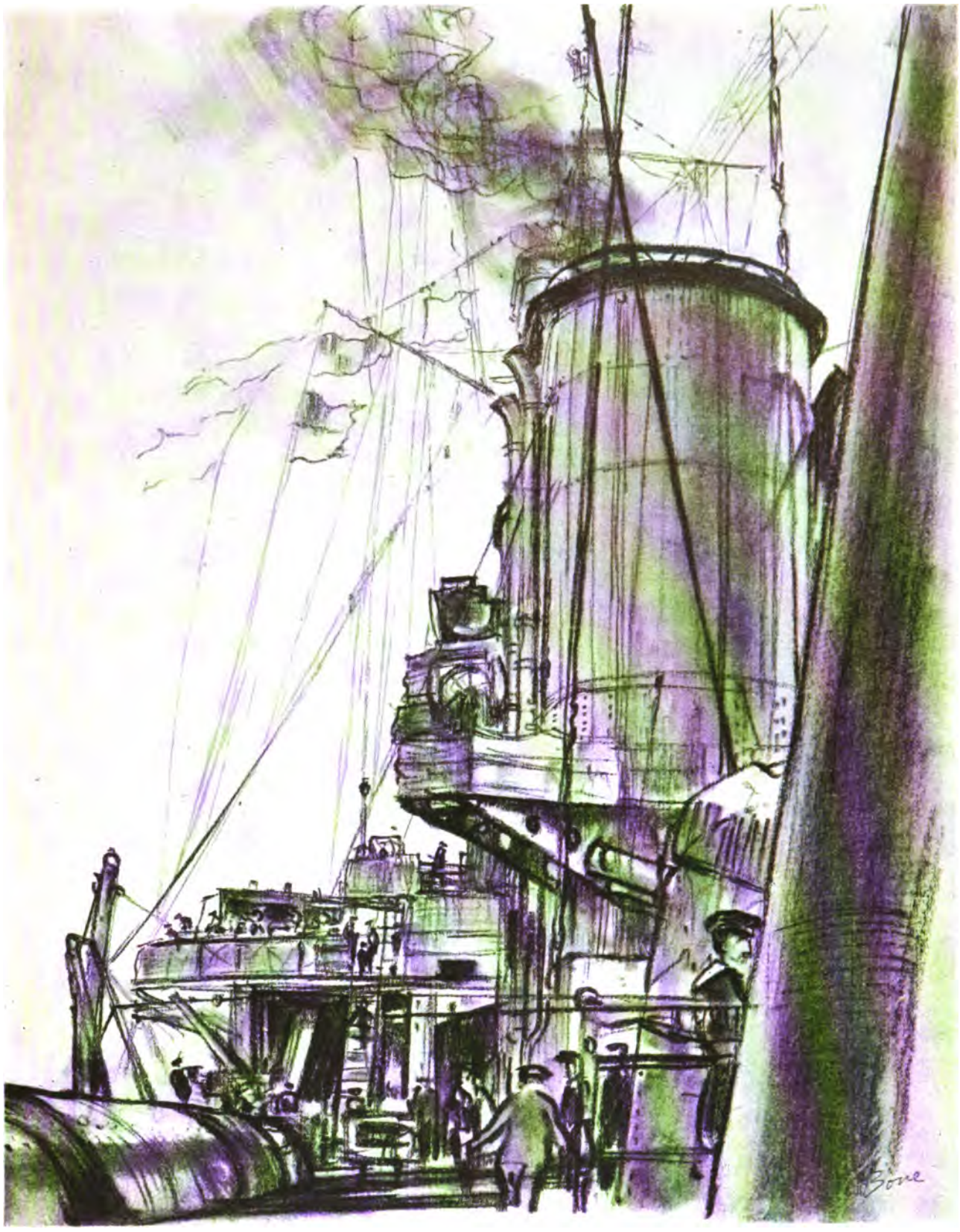
The crew of a Battleship at "General Drill" on a brisk spring morning is an exhilarating sight to the spectator posted at a quiet corner well out of the way. The band of the Marines plays, and the maximum of everything possible seems to be going on at once. In the sketch the ship's boats have been launched and are making their way with steady stroke out to a neighbouring ship and back.



XCI

ON A BATTLESHIP: THE AFTER DECK

The delicate but firm precision of the drawing conveys aptly the general air of a man-of-war's deck, where everything is intricate without confusion, and busy without fuss.



XCII

INSIDE THE TURRET

Interior of a Big Gun Turret on a Battleship, with the crew at their stations. The breech of the gun is open and looks gigantic in this confined space where every inch is made to serve some purpose. An officer is seen in the gangway between the twin guns, but of course the higher direction of the firing is transmitted from the " Fire control " station situated elsewhere.

XCIII

A BOILER ROOM ON A BATTLESHIP

The vessel is oil-driven, so the stoke-hold is robbed of its old terrors and is remarkably cool. The stokers seem few in proportion to the size of the place, but they are experts of a higher class than coal furnaces required.

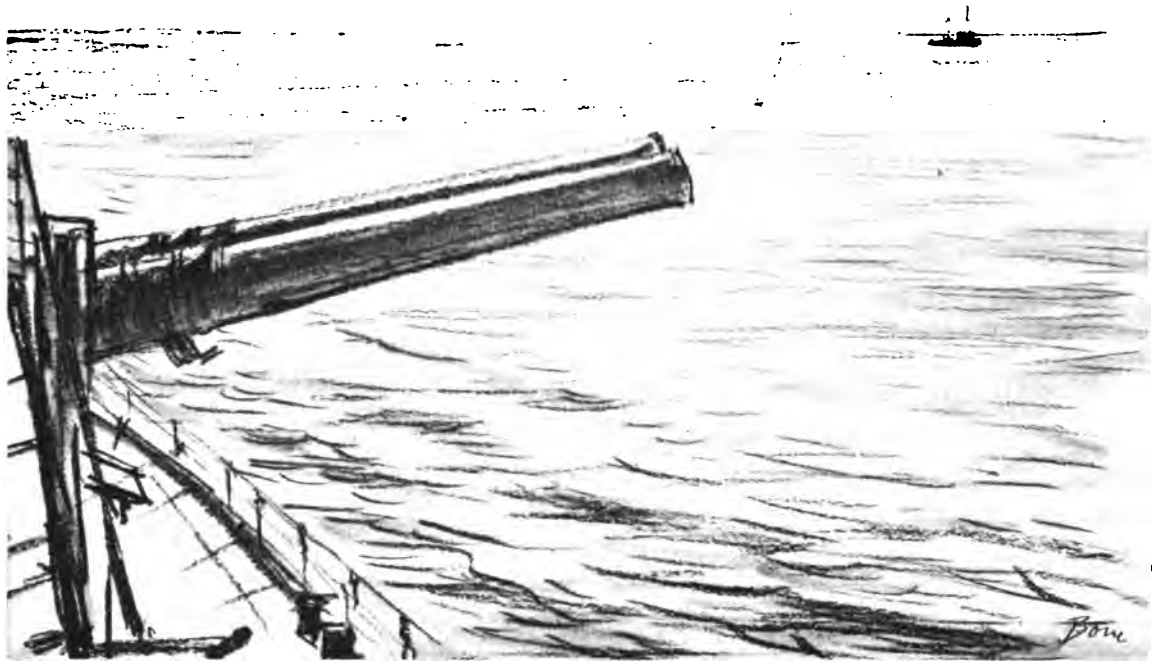
XCIV (a and b)

PRACTICE FIRING: BIG GUNS ON A BATTLESHIP

Here the scale of the great guns is only given by the dwarfed rail beneath and by the long stretch of horizon which the funnels subtend. But no merely physical ratio can convey the impression of enormousness that a great naval gun makes on the imagination. By subtler technical means the artist has managed to transfuse this impression from his own imagination to that of the spectator of the drawing.

ON A BATTLESHIP: SUNSET AFTER A WET DAY

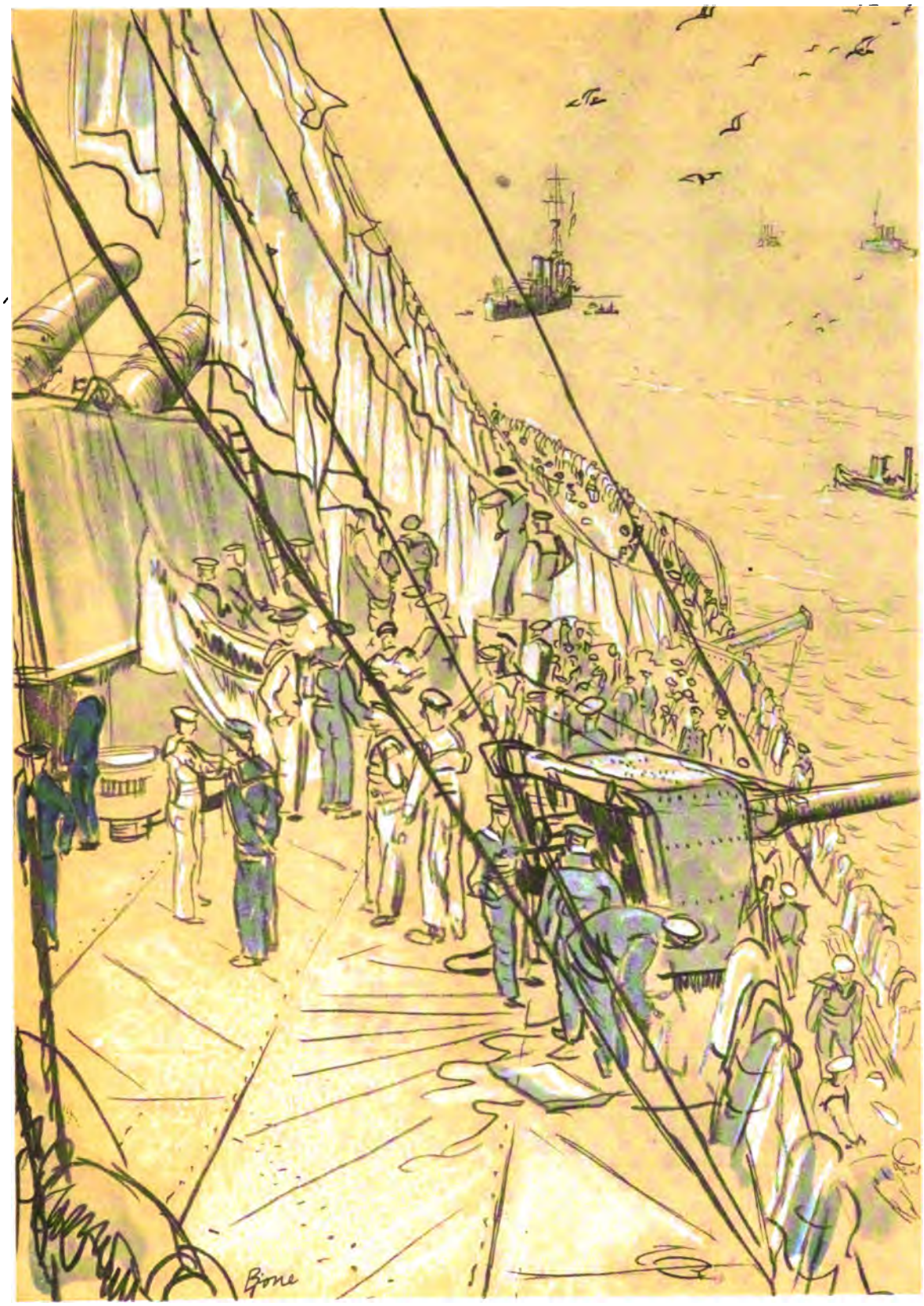
The sailor has much to bear from the weather, but at any rate he sees to extraordinary advantage the glories of sunset and the "incomparable pomp of dawn," unsullied by the smoke of the land.



XCV

ON A BATTLESHIP: AIRING BLANKETS

An unfamiliar aspect of a warship to the public, but, to Jack, it returns with unfailing regularity once a week. In the cramped space it requires careful management to keep all the great crew in health and comfort.


Bone

XCVI

CAPTAIN CYRIL FULLER,
C.M.G., D.S.O. ROYAL NAVY

XCVII

THE FLEET'S POST OFFICE

To the right is an old hulk which now serves as a sorting office for the Fleet's Post. Around it there is at certain hours a busy scene, picket boats coming from the various ships to deliver or collect their mails.

XCVIII

IN THE SUBMERGED TORPEDO FLAT OF A BATTLESHIP

Interior of the Chamber from which the torpedoes are fired. The torpedo in the foreground is partly engaged in the tube through which it will be fired. To the right is seen the exterior of another tube. The men are lowering, for stowage in safety, a trial torpedo which has been fired for a practice run and then re-captured.

XCIX

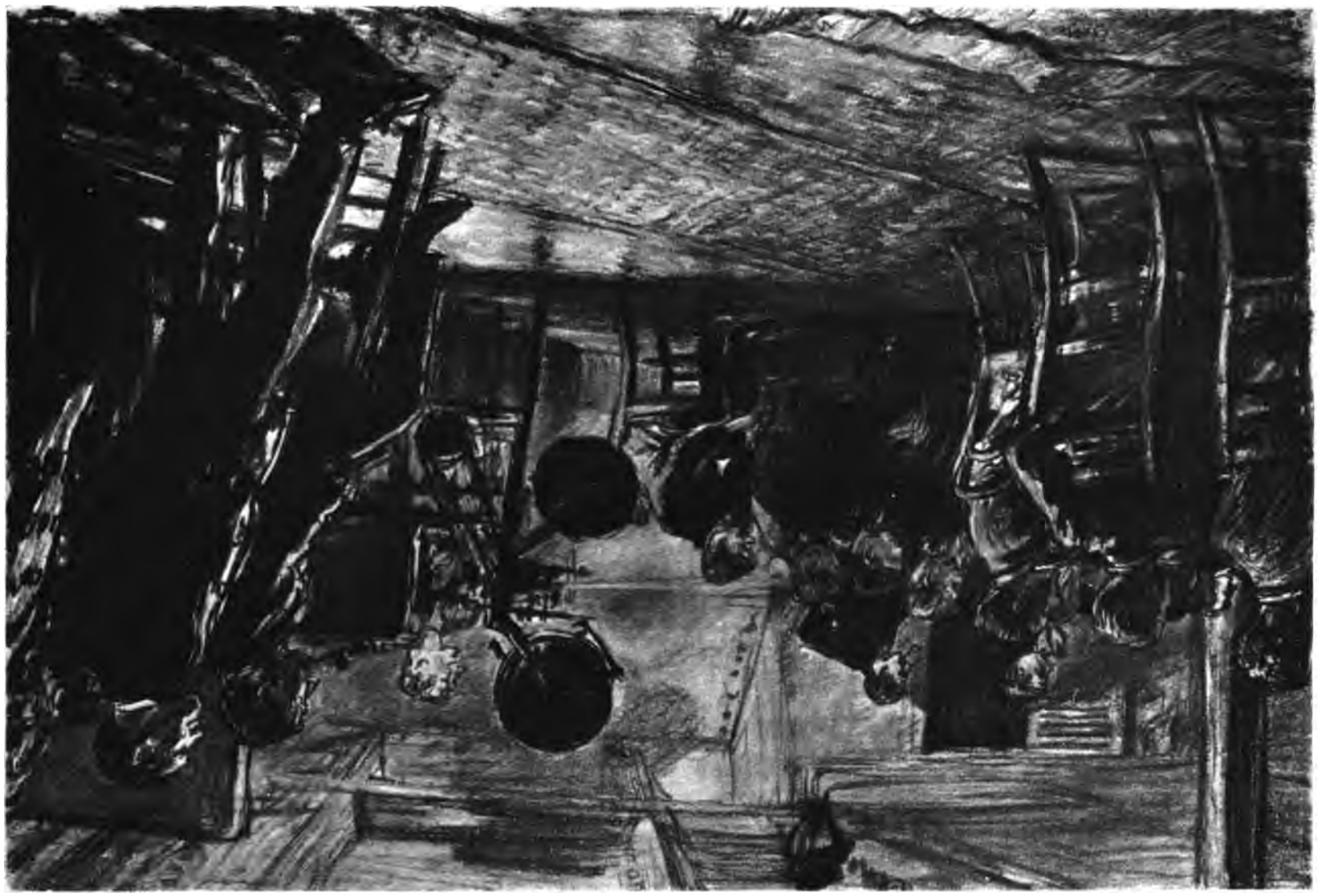
SAILORS ON A BATTLESHIP MAKING MUNITIONS FOR THE ARMY

This is Jack at his handiest, especially from the Army point of view. The party are using spare time to make "grommets" of rope-work to go round the bases of 9.2 shells. Not many people, even in the Army, know that the Army have come to look to the men of the Fleet for a great supply of these necessaries.

C

THE CINEMA ON A BATTLESHIP

A relaxation immensely popular and quite easy for the handy men, who abound in the Navy, to equip and run. Being their own child, each ship takes a pride in its "pictures." The operator in this case was the Chief Mechanician of the ship and the film the "Battle of the Ancre." In the centre are a group of midshipmen, to the right a group of warrant officers. In the foreground will be observed the ever ready fire hose.



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THE WESTERN FRONT

DRAWINGS BY

MUIRHEAD BONE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

GENERAL SIR DOUGLAS HAIG

G.C.B., G.C.V.O., K.C.I.E., A.D.C.

GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK:
DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & COMPANY

1917.

THE VIRGIN OF ALBERT

Cover Illustration

The grandiose modern church of Albert is almost completely ruined by German shells. The tall west tower is shattered into a crooked stalk of brickwork. On its summit, which is here shown, a huge gilt figure of the Virgin, with the Child held up in her hands, has been struck out of the upright by a shell and juts out precariously over the street. It is visible for several miles round, and a half-serious local belief has grown up that when the figure falls the war will end.

A VILLAGE ON THE SOMME

Title-page Illustration

A typical Picardy village about twelve miles behind the British front of November, 1916, and near our point of junction with the French. The drawing gives a glimpse of the ordinary life of such villages during the period of their occupation by British soldiers.

38-183
3-2

WAR DRAWINGS

BY

MUIRHEAD BONE

EDITION DE LUXE — Size 20 by 15 inches

Mr. Muirhead Bone's drawings in France are being reproduced under the title of "The Western Front" (Monthly, 60 cents). In addition to this publication a selection of drawings will be reproduced on a larger scale to give full effect to the artist's work. There will be a series of parts, each containing ten illustrations, among which will be included some scenes in munition works in Great Britain. The drawings will be printed in one, two or more colours, according to the character of the original.

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4. THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME
5. GORDON HIGHLANDERS, OFFICERS' MESS
6. A GUN HOSPITAL
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Plate I.—GENERAL SIR DOUGLAS HAIG, G.C.B., G.C.V.O., K.C.I.E., A.D.C.

II.—GRAND'PLACE AND RUINS OF THE CLOTH HALL, YPRES

III.—A STREET IN YPRES

IV.—A DISTANT VIEW OF YPRES

V.—A VILLAGE CHURCH IN FLANDERS

VI.—THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME

VII.—"TANKS"

VIII.—RUINED GERMAN TRENCHES NEAR CONTALMAISON

IX.—THE NIGHT PICKET

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XI.—GORDON HIGHLANDERS: OFFICERS' MESS

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XV.—AT A BASE STATION

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XVII.—DISEMBARKED TROOPS WAITING TO MARCH OFF

XVIII.—SOLDIERS' BILLETS: MOONLIGHT

XIX.—A GUN HOSPITAL

XX.—AN OBSERVATION POST

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THE CASTLE OF PÉRONNE

(*Cover Illustration*).

For a description of another view of this Castle, see Plate IV

THE CATHEDRAL, ARRAS

(*Headpiece*)

Seen from the North-west. The cross is at the summit of the West front. The German front line, until April 9, 1917, ran from left to right, a mile away, across the suburbs of the city. It was there that the German and British sentries stood, at one point, within twenty feet of each other, as described in the Introduction to Part III of "The Western Front." The Cathedral, now roofless and ruined past repair, was a late eighteenth century building, not of the first order. The ruined tower of the more beautiful Town Hall, a building full of rich and curious Gothic and Renaissance work in stone and wood, is seen on the left.

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4. The Battle of the Somme
5. Gordon Highlanders, Officers' Mess
6. A Gun Hospital
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- A Coring Machine at Work on a Big Gun Tube

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- H.M.S. Lion in Dry Dock
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The Western Front

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XIX.—THE PRIEST'S GARDEN: SPRING
XX.—A SOLDIERS' CEMETERY

IN PREPARATION.

THE WESTERN FRONT—Vol. I.

WITH INTRODUCTION BY

FIELD-MARSHAL SIR DOUGLAS HAIG,

G.C.B., G.C.V.O., K.C.I.E., A.D.C.

The first five parts of "The Western Front" will be bound up in volume form, with additional letterpress and index. This publication will contain 100 plates after Mr. Muirhead Bone's drawings with the British Armies in the Field, in Munition Works in England, and with the Grand Fleet.

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